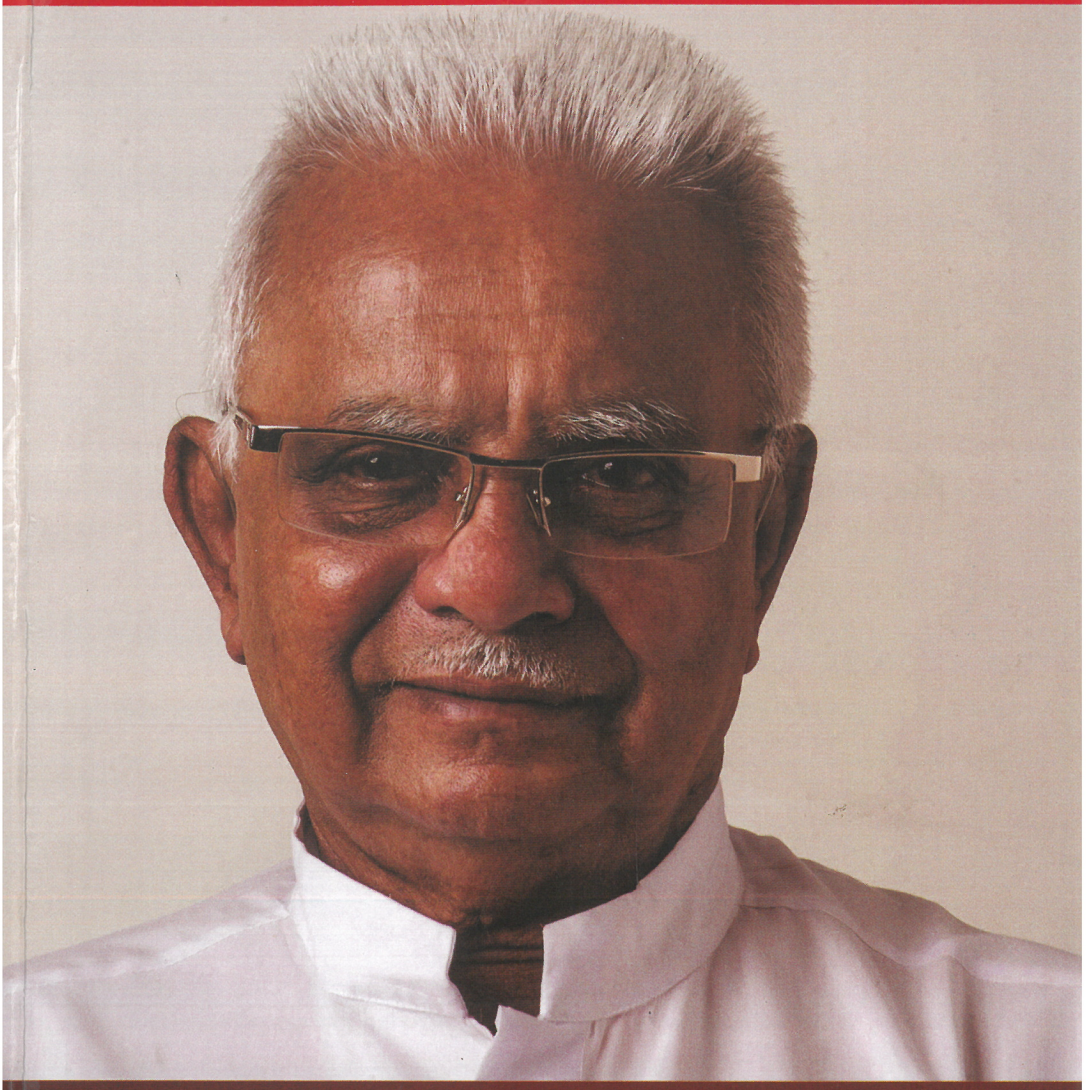
A.T. Ariyaratne



BHAVA THANHA

Vol. 4

An Autobiography

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Bhava Thanha
An Autobiography

Fourth Volume

A.T. Ariyaratne

A. T. Ariyaratne

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A. T. A

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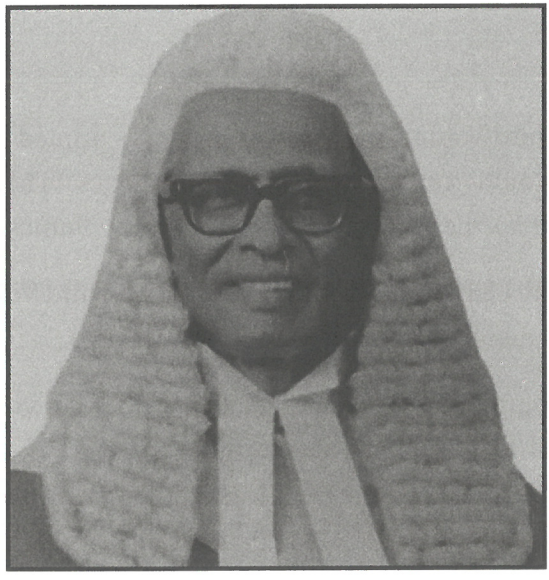

The fourth volume of

Bhava Thanha

is gratefully dedicated to

The former Justice of the Supreme Court

Mr J. F. A Sousa

For, fearlessly objecting to the decisions

of Wanasundara Commission

and for courageously stating his opposition for

holding a sword over the heads of Sarvodaya and me.

A. T. Ariyaratne

FORWARD

When the Third Volume of Bhava Thanha was printed it was seen that the book would run for over thousand pages. Therefore, it was decided to break the volume in to two separate volumes.

All those who I have gratefully thanked on the Third Volume, I wish to respectfully thank the same on this Fourth Volume.

The autobiography which was published in four volumes already exceeded 2100 pages. However, the experience I hold could be penned to two more volumes. If I was blessed with few more years of life I wish to gift two more books for the reader.

I respectfully thank very Rev. Buddhangala Ananda Thero for providing the epilogue for this volume. I dedicate the Fourth Volume to retired Supreme Court Judge late Mr J. F. A Sousa. The introduction by Professor Tennison Perera for the Third Volume of Bhava Thanha is sufficient for this volume as well.

May all creatures be free from suffering !

Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne

No. 114, 'Samudana',
Rawatawatte Rd,
Moratuwa.
August 2014

Introduction

It is an undebatable truth that a readers courage and personality is influenced for growth through perusing life stories of great men who have devotedly served their country and have a wealth of experience to offer. Reading such biographies offer numerous ideals to one's life. Especially reading the life story of a community leader who has selflessly dedicated his life to serve the public is a sensational experience.

During the end of the 1950s decade the effort of a young teacher from Nalanda College to aid a desolate impoverished community through a small shramadana campaign unexpectedly grew to be the initiation of a nationwide community development project. This initiation was not a mere dream but was a reality that was acclaimed by the international community recognizing Lanka Jathika Sarvodaya Shramadana Society as a renowned voluntary organization. I consider it a privilege to be able to write the introduction for the fourth volume of Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne's autobiography which is the revelation of this story.

The readers of the first and second volumes of Bhava Thanha would have experienced the humbleness of Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne. The simplicity of the conveyance of ideas keeps the reader continuously interested, a style which continuous into the third and fourth volumes. The lessons the reader could receive from an autobiography is immense. It is no exaggeration to say that these books are examples of such wealth.

It is no small task that Dr. A. T. Ariyartne undertook in establishing the Sarvodaya concept of Mahatma Gandhi in Sri Lanka adding the essence of Buddhism within the function of the Sarvodaya Movement. The mammoth effort and courage exemplified in turning a small sharamadana campaign into the magnificent tree of Sarvodaya today is a glorious praiseworthy task. Sarvodaya is an organization for social revolution and is a Movement that was established to reform society eradicating social inequality and injustice.

Bhava Thanha offers a treasure of knowledge as from Dr. Ariyaratne's own words it speaks of the issues challenges and humiliations that materialized during the journey of Sarvodaya. There's no one in the present society who doesn't know about Sarvodaya. This success was due to the meritorious leadership of Dr. Ariyaratne.

"Sarvodaya" can be defined as directing one's time, thoughts and strength for the development of all. The growth of an individual based on the personality development which leads to the prosperity of the village is called "Gramodaya". The development of the country through the development of the village is called "Deshodaya". For this to materialize each individual is required to share work as brothers and execute each other's responsibilities. The Sarvodaya concept is different to the contemporary village and social development. It is a concept that encompasses the use of resources in a village towards its sustainable development. The decisions are also made by the residents of the village. Bhava Thanha third volume also reveals teachings of the principles and philosophy Sarvodaya

inculcates for the material development and peaceful coexistence of the villagers.

This volume includes many speeches that were delivered on international visits by Dr. Ariyaratne. It further, reveals the awards which were received for the service rendered and the background of reasons for bestowing such awards. Through these lectures one could understand the service Sarvodaya rendered to the society on its journey and the philosophy that made such a service a possibility. I feel that including the details and backgrounds of the social service rendered and social leaders of the institutions that presented these awards to Sarvodaya provide important knowledge to all.

Bhava Thanha distinguishes its style structure of presenting from the autobiographies of numerous writers and world leaders. Dr. Ariyaratne has been able to humbly present the kind hospitality shown on his international journeys by his hosts. He also has been able to speak of the harm and sabotage inflicted upon this humanitarian organization with equanimity.

In truth Dr. Ariyaratne's life was no bed of roses. From the volumes one and two also it highlights that since the beginning of this journey he was faced with numerous thorny experiences. It is no secret that this leader faced all such hardships with astounding mental power and strength. The young social leaders can derive ample lessons from Dr. Ariyaratne's life story. His nature of serenity and peaceful composure in situations of chaos is one prominent feature of his personality. The Buddhist saying "Nahi Verena Verani" "Hate cannot

quench hate"; is exemplified by his personality where Bhava Thanha reveals how Dr. Ariyaratne faced enmity with equanimity and courage.

Reading this book gives the understanding of the personality and philosophy of a leader who forgives and treats equally even those who ungratefully abuse and oppose him. I wish to end my introduction of this noble man who tirelessly work on behalf of peace and the poor, with an extract of his own words.

"I believe that the first thing to be understood is that, it is meaningless to only measure the quantifiable social, political and economic development of humans. It is equally important to give prominence to the development of spirituality. The efforts directed towards such an achievement is successful only if those efforts conform to the spiritual, cultural and moral value linkages of the people's life styles."

Professor B. A.Tennyson Perera
Social and Human Science Department,
University of Sri Jayewardenepura,
Nugegoda.

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Man of the Grateful Hearts
Henry Woodward Amarasooriya

Amarasuriya Walawwa

As a child I looked at him with awe. As a youth I looked at him as an exemplary leader. As an elder I looked at him with awe. He is none other than, Mr Henry Woodward Amarasuriya; who was a hero in the fight for independence, a leader of the Buddhist community and a God in the eyes of the educated community of Southern Sri Lanka. Two years ago at the age of 77 (in 1987), when he bid us farewell forever, I with the Buddhist community of the country lamented his loss from the bottom of my heart.

As children we first saw Mr H.W. Amarasuriya in the premises of his historic mansion 'Amaragiri'. Our Unawatuna Buddhist School was situated at the far corner of this mansion. I remember he, who was the manager of all Buddhist schools in Galle, visiting our school for inspection.

Another occasion I remember Mr H. W. Amarasuriya was when he visited Ven. Pandit Ahangama Sri Sumanajothi Thero of Peellagoda Buddhist Temple as the main benefactor of the temple. In that role I saw him as a great village leader.

Mahinda College in Galle is a fitting symbol of commemoration for the service rendered by Mr H.W. Amarasuriya for the betterment of the general education and especially for the uplifting of the Buddhist education. We as past pupils of Mahinda College are ever indebted to him for the dedication he showed to improve the education of the children. He supported the less privileged students to fulfill their education providing them with scholarships, and his dedication was distinguishable with the time and effort he put to personally handpick the best teachers and principals for the schools.

His office was situated in the Talbert town, in Galle, from where he visited the schools inspecting the administration activities while not forgetting to participate in important celebrations in schools. I recollect the immense courage and happiness that his presence awakened in us at those moments.

When his father deceased at the age of 45 he was just a sapling of a very young age of 12. But the inheritance of over 4000 acres of land that befell under his management thrived when he undertook, agribusiness as his profession, discontinuing his higher education at the age of 18. While he displayed profound success in the agriculture industry he also took to develop the education of the young minds of his village.

Mr Amarasuriya opted to live by the rules of Buddhist teachings, thus was a pioneer in Buddhist education and development where he donated profusely to this cause. He vehemently believed for spiritual and disciplinary development; and that religious institutions should take the forefront. He was extensively involved in religious activities that it was as though there was no religious institute that hadn't received from this benevolent hand.

His services to society did not extend only to public appearances and donations but he was keen to participate in any activity that was agreeable to his conscience. Till the late evening of his life Mr Amarasuriya was a very efficient person and held many positions in Buddhist institutes.

As a child, he was the first wealthy person I had heard of. The first portrayal of how a wealthy person should be was formed in my heart through Mr Amarasuriya's character. I have seen many a wealthier persons but the striking difference in selflessness of Mr Amarasuriya compared to these people who merit a comparison. The only indication of Mr Amarasuriya's presence at home was from the number of poor that lined in front of his house, for whom on a certain day every week; he would donate money from his own hands.

He did not limit his service to just promoting catch lines of war, but selflessly used his own wealth to achieve the principles he believed in. He was influenced through religious leaders such as Sri Ahangama Sri Sumanajothi Nayaka Thero, Ven. Anagarika Dharmapala, and Colonel Olcott. The distinguishable gap between Mr Amarasuriya and the wealthy, who strive to please the five senses, is immeasurably distant.

He would drive his Moris Minor for miles helping people, attending funerals consoling the rich and the poor alike. One of the greatest selfless acts he performed was the donation of his birthplace 'Amaragiri' Mansion, to be converted in to a Government Women Teachers Training School.

Invariably his exemplary character influenced our young minds. It was through him that I learnt how to reach the hearts of the poor and helpless. His calm, modest and simple nature was influential. Throughout his service he never wavered from the principles of Buddhism, and thus we should be thankful for his role, for if we enjoy any freedom at present in the political and economical sectors he would have played a part in safe guarding it.

As a cultivator his was a life of success. As a server for mankind, his was a successful story. As a Buddhist educationist, philanthropist and a benefactor his name will be ever immortal.

It is sorrowful to reminiscent the last years of his life whence he became frail in body and lost his vision completely. But this never broke his spirit or vision of life. He would continually attend all meetings of the (Amadyapa Sabhava) at Vidyodaya Temple. During these occasions, many a times, I have walked him from his vehicle to the meetings where he erased all doubt of his disabilities, displaying his ever present acute intelligence and efficiency in mind to the attendees.

Henry Woodward Amarasuriya is no longer amongst us but he will be ever present in the grateful hearts of generations to come.

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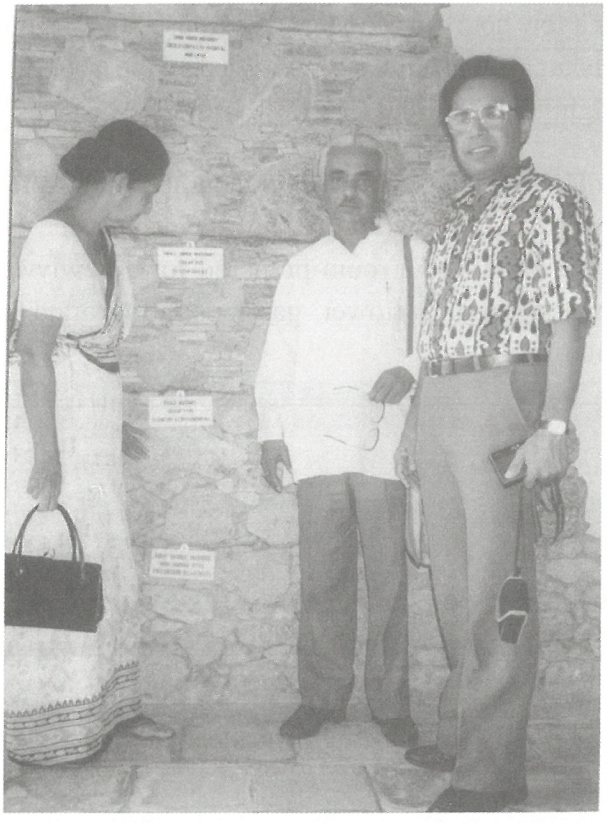
Meeting President Zia Ul Haq
Verbal message from the President of Pakistan

Today is 19.09.1987. I am at Hotel Shalimar in Rawalpindi. On the 14th I left Sri Lanka with Dr. Dharmapriya Wesumperuma; Director, Sri Lanka Foundation Institute and Mrs. Mabel Ganegoda; President, of the Lanka Mahila Samithiya (Womens Association).

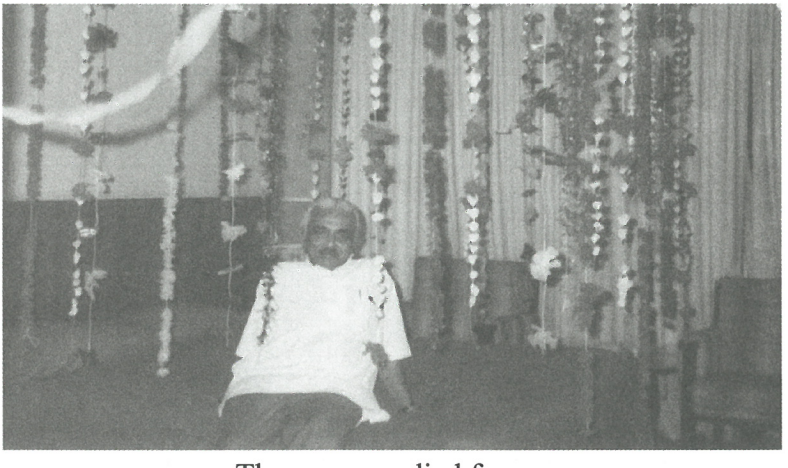


Ms. Mabel Ganegoda, Me and Mrs. Dharmapriya Wesumperuma

While travelling, from Colombo to Karachchi I had the opportunity to speak with Professor Cyril Ponnamperuma. After discussing on the general situation in Sri Lanka and Prof.'s experiences during the past years he revealed his wish to work with Sarvodaya. Importantly he had already realized, with 03 years experience in the Basic Education Institute that, under officialdom (Niladaree Kramaya) attempting to implement any new technological innovation for the betterment of any system, would be a futile effort.

We slept for a few hours in the Mid Way House hotel near the airport and left for Islamabad at 7 .00 a.m. We reached the airport by 9.30 am and took lodgings at Shalimar Hotel.

At Shalimar Hotel (in Rawalpindi) room number 18 was reserved for me. As I entered the room I thought they have given me the room by mistake as it looked like a room prepared for a newlywed couple, decorated with hanging flower garlands all around and floral arrangements.



The room readied for me

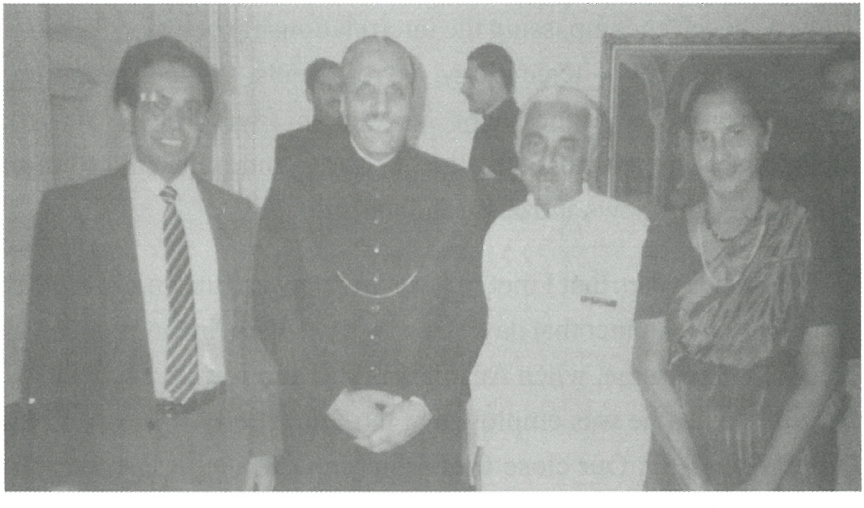
I suspect that they have taken the trouble to arrange the most luxurious room for me, including a reception area for visitors. On the 15th at 10.30 a.m I was due to participate for the inauguration ceremony of the conference. This gave me only a space of half an hour to prepare. The Chief Guest was Minister Nazim Ahamad. The ex-minister & the president of Village Development Institute, Mr Mrsaprulla Khan Jamali, Dr Sadik Malik, Director of Projevt ICVA, Pier Campbell, Mr A.C Sen and I were seated at the podium. I delivered the inaugural speech.

The theme of the conference was 'Management Development and Training of NGO's of South Asia'. The SAARC representatives from Sri Lanka, India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan; Mr Edgar Venisuvela, Gen. Secretary of ANGOC, Philippines Mr Vincent Ferdinand, Gen. Secretary, IRED and forty others participated for the conference.

I gave a speech encompassing the interrelationship between freedom, development, ethics, technology, governments, justice, peace and management. Our Ambassador Mr Austin Jayewardene and the Ambassador of Nepal and the High Commissioner of India commended my views and congratulated me.

It was after 10 years that I met Mr Austin Jayawardana and I accepted his invitation to dinner that day. Back then we were first introduced by Dharma Gunasinghe, when Austin was still a university student. We met often when he was employed at the Education Ministry and the Cultural Ministry. Our close friendship grew while he served as the Government Agent in Mannar.

with Mr. Austin Jayewardene



with President Zia Ul Hug, Dr. Wesumperuma and Madam Ganegoda

He was appointed the Ambassador to Pakistan four and a half years ago. He was a well versed scholar of the oriental languages. I had dinner at his place four times and today, the 22nd, when I left for the Islamabad airport with Wesum, Austin came to accompany us through the VIP gate. In Karachchi, Mr Aloysius, was appointed to attend to me till I boarded the aircraft to Sri Lanka, on the way, he treated us to lunch at his residence.

On the 17th the President of Pakistan, Mr Zia Ul Hak treated us to a welcome dinner where being the leader of about 40 representatives, I had the opportunity to sit by his side and converse with him. I spoke with him for over an hour.

He began the conversation saying, 'I can understand the plight of President Jayewardene, and it's everybody's duty to support him on any steps he takes to solve the issue. Whatever it may be people of Pakistan and I will be with Sri Lanka'. We discussed on many subjects such as ethnic issue, Pakistan's Buddhist cultural heritage, strengthening the friendship between Sri Lanka and Pakistan, the rural development institute and about Sarvodaya. Also, he gave me a verbal message to be conveyed to President J R Jayewardene as soon as I reached the country.

I presented my views to him. I proposed an annual exchange of employees between Sarvodaya and the Rural Development Foundation Programme, and a visit by a professional from our end to analyze its activities and to establish a Buddhist cultural center in Thakshila.

On the 18th we went to visit the Thakshila, but with limited time we were able to visit only the museum and one monastery. I decided to return soon to revisit the University, Dharmarajika Dagabo and the ancient towns of Mohandejaro- Harappa towns.

At the South Asia Regional Conference

Bridging the Buddhist cultures of Pakistan and Sri Lanka will be a road to connect the people of the nations considering the unpalatable situation of India and Sri Lanka at present. Besides this, Sri Lanka should connect with the history of Buddhism found in Pakistan and Afghanistan since world's most revered ancient ruins of the Buddhist heritage are found in these countries.

On the 19th I received a special gift from Mr Sia Ul Hak which was a valuable carpet. While thanking for this gift I also, made a request, by the return letter, which was to establish a Buddhist Cultural center in Thakshila and to appoint a Sri Lankan monk as its director.

One of the major achievements while we were in Pakistan was the inauguration for a conference of South Asian Non-governmental Organizations (SANGO). It was decided to establish the headquarters in Islamabad and under my leadership an organization committee was also formed.

On a number of occasions the television showed my interviews with the President of Pakistan which is sure to have strengthened the friendship between the countries.

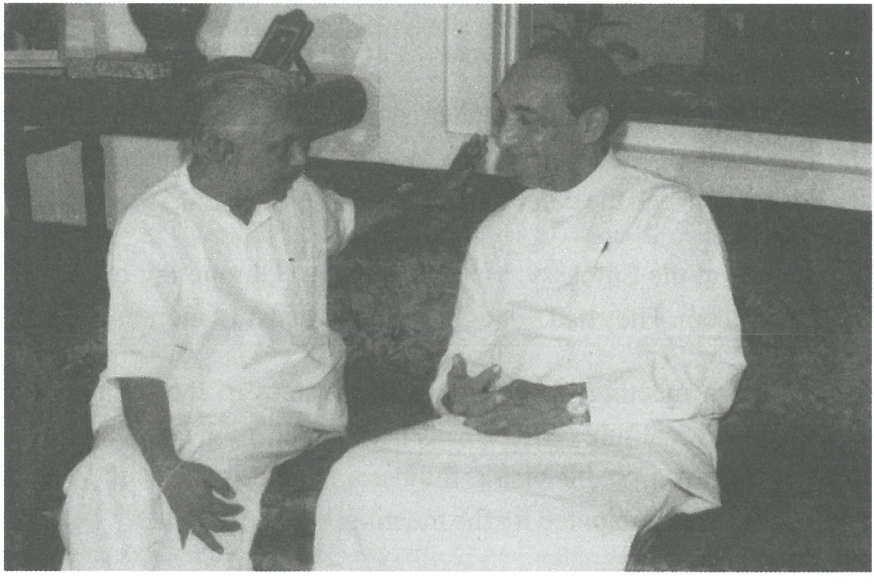
The deputy at the Embassy, Mr & Mrs Oliver Guruge invited us to a meal with them. They had a daughter who was just 14 months old.

On the 21st a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Asian Rural Development Institute (AIRD) was held under my leadership. Raja, Govind, Agrawal, Sadik Malik, Sundaram and Ratnam with Wesum as an observer participated for the meeting.

Wesum and I are now at the international airport of Maldives. It's 9 pm on the 22nd. We left Rawalpindi at 10.am, reached Karachi at 11.30. However, until we boarded the plane at 3.30 we were unaware that the plane would take the route through Maldives. In any event me having travelled the world over; maybe there was a reason why I had to spend a few hours in Maldives airport.

The plane had deviated from the normal route and instead had flown to Maldives in order to avoid a heavy storm. However, we were held there for two hours and when I reached Sri Lanka it was passed midnight. When I reached home I straight away went to bed as I was exhausted.

It was past 6.am when I awoke the next morning. Meanwhile the President J R Jayewardene had telephoned me twice requesting me to pay him a visit promptly.



with President J. R. Jayewardene

When I reached his house at Ward place it was around 8.am and the President had already left leaving the message for me to meet him immediately at his office. Unable to fathom the reason for the emergency I went to his office. Seeing him I comprehended that he was under a dilemma unable to resolve some issue. Using his love for humor I enquired, why he looked like a despondent Portuguese General who had lost his army.

He said, 'Sit down, sit down, President Ziya Ul Hak called and informed that he had sent a verbal message through you. What is the message?'

I informed him the message I was asked to deliver.

Trusting me he spoke of the issue he has faced at present with India. With much dismay he said that, after the military operation in Wadamarachchi India obstinately, without the permission of the government had sent three planes to drop food from air to Jaffna and that Sri Lanka cannot antagonize India and be exposed to an invasion.

The telephone rang. The message was that the High Commissioner of India, Mr D N Dixith is travelling from the airport to meet the President. President opened the door to the next room and told me to wait until after the visitor left to continue on our conversation.

After a discussion for half an hour with Mr Dixith, the President with a victorious smile and a blissful demeanor appeared to speak with me.

'Ariyaratne India does not wish to invade us; instead they have decided to send a peace brigade at their own expense.'

'Did you agree to that Mr President?'

'Yes, that is the best thing we can do. This is a major victory for us'

'But Sir, I'm against it. It is better to solve our issues our selves without allowing entrance to a foreign army, isn't it?

'Let's see, let's see'

That ended our conversation. I left the office with a heavy heart.

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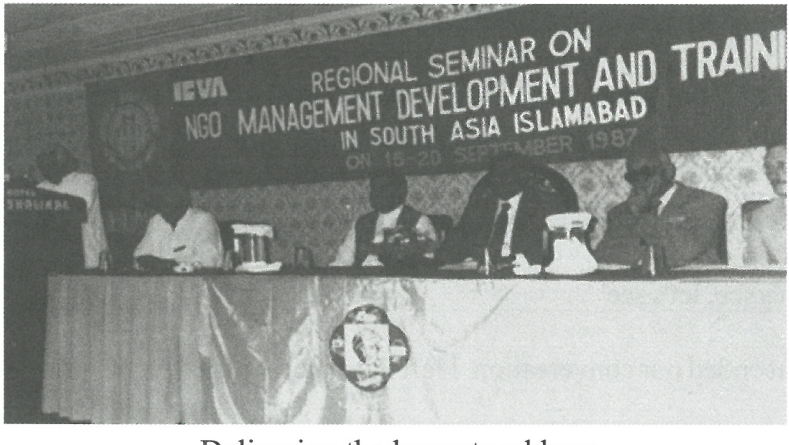
South Asian Regional Seminar
Keynote - Address
Islamabad, Pakistan

**"South Asian Ngo Management,
Development and Training"**

Hon'ble Minister of Internal Affairs Mr Nazeem Ahamed Ahir, Former Minister and the President of the Rural Development Foundation Mr Mirsaprulhan Khan Jamali, The executive President of the Foundation, Dr M. Sadik Malik, Programme Director, ICVA Mr Pears Campbell, Members of Parliament, Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am grateful to the International Section of the Non-governmental organizations in Geneva for providing me the opportunity of addressing this August assembly, the international conference.



Delivering the keynote address

We are enjoying the independence achieved for four and a half decades. We decided during the first decade that we follow the same development systems the capitalist countries under which we were named colonies, practiced. During that period our plan was to adopt the same economic policies that the western countries adopted. As the results were not worth mentioning, during the second decade we were thinking of a people's participatory system. As the policies laid down by the government should be carried out properly, people's participation based voluntary organizations started getting involved with the implementation of government policies. We spoke at national and international level conferences, which, in addition to implementation of policies, people's participation should be there at planning stage too. Although there are good development methodologies at village level, unfortunately, these are not used by our people. All these factors led to a situation where we started to ascertain, during the third decade, the true meaning of development and what our genuine goals should be. Then we realized that we would never be able to get back to earning a living through pre-colonial systems as the rich countries robbed us of these sustainable forms of livelihood. We also realized that satisfying material wants alone would not bring about happiness. From the third decade onwards these thoughts started materializing into action to some extent. Training came in to the picture and development projects came into existence across the world.

Management has become a popular subject evincing much enthusiasm among the non-governmental sector. Recently I participated in two conferences in Malaysia and London under the theme 'Development Management for Non-governmental Organizations'.

When speaking about development, it is not sufficient to continue our thinking to development alone, but the entire process has to be taken into consideration. Development factor should embrace a good knowledge, and the capacity to take an analytical view relating to the method/system to be adopted, the type of results expected and how the method/system is planned to be implemented. In other words, it is very important to combine all these into a single practicable activity.

Prior to independence, our countries preserved whatever values we possessed. Freedom fighters of Asia, Africa and Latin America were able to proceed with their struggle as there was a well established value system in our societies then. During the colonial era, the leaders were able to withstand the onslaught as the community values were intact. Some leaders of the struggle kept for themselves the political and administrative leadership. Maybe they thought that they were doing a service to the community. Some others, deviating politics and administration, got closer to the people and rendered priceless service. Such people were few in number. They introduced policies and programmes aimed at helping the community to awaken with positive thinking for self-development. Non-governmental organizations today are the results of these efforts of the selfless group of such people. When the political and administrative system could not align itself with social justice, the politically powerful started shifting away from the people who were forced to face political and economic problems. As these two groups could not find an amicable solution to people's problems, they were unable to face them together. On many occasions these two groups took different directions regarding the same issue. Then there was derision thrown at the

leaders of non-governmental voluntary organizations, who have dedicated their lives for the common good. The society too did not respond to the services they received from the voluntary organizations. Even in my country, the efforts we put in for the well being of the poor people were termed as useless by some mentally disturbed persons.

Currently, it has been well-understood that, for the common good of the country, government and the non-governmental voluntary organizations should work together. It is essential that the spiritual, cultural and moral value systems that helped achieve success in the struggle for independence be dug out of slumber and put back to life. Also, as fortification against possible future disaster, people should link themselves into a chain and work united for the good of the country. We live in a world full of violence, extending excessive violence against nature too, destroying the valuable forest land leading to soil erosion, polluting water and making the environment work against us. In short, nature, which is the only savior of mankind, has been challenged by the mankind. Spiritual and moral degradation has brought in the competitive factor to violence as well. To match the situation colossal and dangerous weaponry is produced. Nuclear weapons can, not only destroy life but the entire planet.

The very valuable natural resources that can be easily used to meet the needs of mankind are used for destruction purposes. Couldn't these resources be used to feed the hungry, cloth the naked and provide shelter to the homeless? Much has to be done on behalf of humanity. There is responsibility in this direction. Therefore, the government and the non-governmental organizations should work hand in glove

for peace and the well being of the people similar to the story of the blind carrying the lame on his back.

Seated here are the leaders of main non-governmental organizations in Asia. Some of the programmes of the non-governmental organizations are better planned and implemented well that they have geared the community towards self development and helped them immensely, performing much better than what the governments were able to do. If the governments provided the necessary information and cooperation relating to their activities to the Non-governmental organizations, achieving great results would be possible.

Keeping this in mind how could the quality of management systems and training programmes be enhanced? There are many essential factors to be considered. Firstly, our targets should be clearly understood. This is a conceptual problem based on the results. Secondly, technologies and strategies that could be handed over to the poor should be well thought of, for the poor communities to undertake their own development activities. This involves far sighted responsibility. When needs and technology to be used are treated as a whole, good results can be expected. There is much that we can learn from the South Asian non-governmental organizations. There are representatives from Bangladesh, Nepal, Philippines and Sri Lanka here today. They have combined spiritual and moral values with scientific skills and have formulated management methodologies to suit their communities. Thirdly, it is important to build up appropriate systems.

Sarvodaya Movement in Sri Lanka link itself with 9,000 villages out of which 5,600 villages have their own development plans to suit their

needs. Up to 300,000 people are trying to develop themselves through their own self effort. The main aim of Sarvodaya is to introduce to the people practicable, appropriate methods of development to satisfy their needs, giving due consideration to the environment, water, food, clothing, health facilities, housing, power, communication, education and spiritual awakening. When these are fulfilled Sarvodaya will be successful in its efforts.

When people reach this level of development through their own perseverance, government too is obliged to perform its duty by the community by proper understanding of the situation and helping the people. As the government mechanism finds it a big problem, people themselves have to take the necessary steps and subsequently the government takes the responsibility. Then it is possible for quality development to emerge.

As voluntary organizations, we enjoy the other rights and there is room for the government machinery to be suspicious of us. Therefore, it is our duty to be transparent in our activities, act with honesty and dedication, having full understanding of our objectives which will dispel the suspicions, if there are any. There is another noble duty we, as voluntary organizations can perform for the well being of the mankind. That is, the creation of a psycho-social base capable of directing the people along the path of spiritual awakening. The main problem is to link justice with peace. Without righteousness peace cannot be achieved. Everyone should work together. When we think of social, political and economic systems, there is the in between factor, 'development' coming in to the scene, indicating to us the need for decentralization of power, but we are used to governments with

centralized power. We should unitedly strengthen ourselves as non-governmental organizations. Then only we are able to display our capabilities to our governments. We should be shining examples to our governments by our deeds and we are expected to help people to evaluate their needs, obtain maximum benefits employing such skills and finally help them to trust themselves and establish a democratic, decentralized social system for the benefit of all. By such action the non-governmental organizations are able to show the governments of their countries to look for resources within their countries and utilize them properly for the benefit of the general population. It is essential that communities should hold discussions at all levels, discarding their differences, if any, with the non-governmental organizations to ensure a prosperous future by planning ahead. The proven management skills that we possess can be initially adopted. Without getting in to competition with government machinery, how is this accomplishment possible? I believe the only way the governments can establish peace and justice is through the collective effort of the people. There is no alternative method other than from the bottom of the pyramid and perform our duty by the people.

The quality development of the non-governmental organizations should be mentioned here. Professionals of various disciplines joining the non-governmental organizations and offering their expertise in their particular field, undertaking large scale projects, is proof, bringing us joy. I am personally in contact with professionals who have joined non-governmental organizations, not seeking fame and money, but have offered their expertise for the simple joy they received in working for people. Voluntary service does not end with working free for the benefit of others. It has more, it means self

satisfaction. The work involved in the non-governmental organizations is similar to that of the government procedures of agreements, conditions of employment, commercial projects and so on, in concept and responsibility. In the non-governmental sector duties are performed with proper planning, supervision and control and evaluation of the results. For the continuation of non-governmental activity, training of personnel in various fields is of great importance.

When various professional skills start pouring in to the non-governmental structure, care should be taken that the dedicated voluntary service factor should not ever be allowed to weaken. While we utilize scientific technologies and appropriate skills as tools to achieve our material objectives, we must always be mindful of the spiritual development we should aim at for harmonious human existence.

Before, I conclude my speech, I take this opportunity, on behalf of all participants, of thanking the government of Pakistan and the Rural Development Foundation for affording us this occasion, warmly welcoming us and treating us with utmost attention and best of hospitality. Our stay in your country was most fruitful. Thank you very much.

Dr D. Wesumperuma and Ms. Mabel Ganegoda of the *Mahila Samtithiya* are the other participants who accompanied me.

At the end of the Conference a new organization titled South Asian Non-governmental Organizations (SANGO) was established at its headquarters.

with those who Attended conference

Through the patronage of the Non-governmental Organisations Management web opportunities for continuous dialogue with the organizations of the region become possible. Fruitful discussions relating to social justice, preservation of environment, cultural similarities, building of self-confidence and personal interaction were held. It was decided that a work plan be prepared encompassing these areas, also emphasizing the need for the development of women and the helpless communities.

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A Mutually Acceptable Political System for a Perplexed Land

By May 1988, my attitude towards the government and the entire political arena further deteriorated. On 15th of May 1988 I journeyed to Amsterdam in Netherlands by a KLM airplane. In this tour I was due to reach Canada and England as well.

The following diary entry which was penned on route to Amsterdam from Colombo shows the way my thoughts processed those days.

"But when you think of the country no one can be at peace. The last letter I read when I left home was from Rohana Wijeweera. His letter which he had ink signed and posted from Colombo, said that the so called treaty signed between the government and the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (Peoples Liberation Front) was a conspiracy and a scam. It clearly stated that the government is not legal and that the President and the leaders are traitors and that all of them should be repudiated from power. Except for the harshness of the language used, not any just person could have contradicted the truth conveyed with those words. I would never endorse or accept violence as a means of a solution. But when a government is consorting to such means it is inevitable that the oppositions would resort to the same measures in retaliation.

When the government's actions are considered they have breached truth and non violence. The Constitution, the law, the distribution of power, has been all misused by the President and the governing party for their private benefit at the expense of the welfare of the public of this country. Their action has

fortified insincerity, violence and selfishness. Therefore, to build a country on non violent, sincere and selfless policies; Sarvodaya cannot embrace or advocate the government's actions.

Taking a democratic path to oppose them too has been prevented and blocked. If we make a statement criticizing their methods, it would result in destroying the long term creative measures that we have taken now, in order to eradicate such situations in the long run.

Same is true of the retributive retaliation measure the JVP is taking at the moment. I do not accept the violent path they have chosen as a solution. But how to oppose a government with laws subservient to government oppression in one hand and has politicians who control the constitutional reforms, has external armed forces, the police and terrorist groups in the other hand? Not by the JVP, their relations or anyone else taking any method against such a government can succeed. It is meaningless even to speak against them in such a situation. If they opted to consider us enemies, thousands of young men and women working in villages will be targets of their wrath.

What can be said about the groups in between these two parties? One is Sri Lanka Freedom Party. The other is the United Socialist Front. Conceptually being in between what alternative solution could these parties give? This is not clear even to me. Comparatively to the opposing poles these two parties evidence presence of nation friendly policies, people friendly attitudes and an inclination towards socialism and democracy. But are they qualified and capable of being custodians of a value based culture non violence and selflessness. Or are they opportunists aiming to win the game of power? Will the solutions they bring to the table stop violence and disruption in the country? I am doubtful about it. However, I will concentrate and occupy my

mind on understanding and questioning as to how Sarvodaya should act in the future under the present condition in order to benefit the public.

According to our virtues and principles we should adopt a system that benefits all. What should that path be? How should it match the present reality?

During such dilemma we should weigh our strength within Sarvodaya. Our strength lies within villages; we are leaders in development, welfare activities and in organizing people. Not involved in any side of party politics is a great strength.

It's in our favour that majority of people are depressed and repulsed with power politics. It's true that when opposing political parties are trying to destroy each other, the normal public too will get vexed and troubled; but in order to achieve long term peace and development it is these impartial public that we should organize and strengthen for which we already have experimented methodologies and realistic strategies.

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Prohibited from A Sarvodaya Festival

At dusk of 01st of July 1988 when the clock struck 4.00 I received a telephone call from Dr Ranjith Amarasinghe the Secretary of the Ministry of Justice.

"An unexpected issue has arisen. I immediately need to come and meet you" he said.

"I'm available, come and meet me." I answered him.

with Dr. Ranjith Amarasinghe

Dr Ranjith Amarasinghe is an educated, humble and lawful government official of a special caliber. He held office in United Nations under numerous civil positions but now with government request has joined the Ministry of Justice as the Secretary. He assumed office not owing to greed for money or fame the position brought. Anytime he could've employed himself at an international or a private company for an emolument hundred times larger than what this position offered him. But with acceptance of this post he proved that his pure intention was only to serve the country and its people. He is one whom I respect immensely. Literally, to the letter, he is an intelligent well educated writer and an accomplished lawyer.

I am not surprised that with these common traits we closely bonded as friends. I revered him. As a result of a thirty year extensive research he published a book named 'Supreme Court of Sri Lanka' which he wished to be published by Vishwa Lekha Publishers. (Sarvodaya Publishing arm)

We were faced with the challenge of printing such a large and an important book at our publishing house. With Mr Amarasinghe's and Susiri malli's leadership we undertook the challenge and printed the volume with all possible perfection which span for over 1000 pages. This project must have been the first of such a large scale and quality publishing that took place in our country. I encouraged them and it was a victory for the three of us and for Sarvodaya.

The launching ceremony of the book was scheduled for the 02nd of July 1988 at BMICH (Bandaranayake Memorial International Conference Hall). We invited Chief Justice Hon'ble Parinda Ranasinghe from the supreme court as our Chief Guest. However, the President J. R.

Jayawardene who learnt about our programme from Justice Minister, Nissanka Wijayaratne and Mr Amarasinghe while on a visit for a separate matter,conveyed his wish to attend the celebration and he invited himself for the event as the Chief Guest.

Hence we changed our progamme accordingly.

The new itinerary was as President J R Jayawardene to be the Chief Guest, Chief Justice in the Chair, welcome speech from me and the vote of thanks by Dr Ranjith Amarasinghe while Justice Minister too was scheduled for a speech.

What was this confusion that arose just 24 hours prior to the programme? I was impatiently awaiting Dr Ranjith Amarasinghes arrival.

Around five o clock in the evening Mr Amarasinghe arrived with Susiri Malli. He spoke with great pain. The soft natured Dr Amarasinghe had not tasted the bitter side of disgraceful politics until then.

"Ari while I was attending to the organizing of the event, I received a message that I should call the President. When I called him he informed that if you attend the programme tomorrow, that he will not be attending. I asked him for the reason? His response was that because you work against him, the Prime Minister and the Government, that he will not attend any event that you are present. When I said that it is such an exclamation for me and that such a thing was not true according to my knowledge, the President replied the

situation is a recent development. When I asked if I could convey this to you he approved."

It is true that I too was shocked momentarily but I didn't show it as at that moment it was my duty to console Dr Ranjith Amarasinghe.

Instead I said "Nothing could be better. At this moment it is a great relief for me to not sit on the same stage with the President. Let's continue with the programme. I am not attending. Appoint another to deliver the welcome speech. Do not get dismayed I am very well used to happenings of this nature".

With the two of them I meditated for half an hour in the meditation hall.

After which I said "In any case I have the right to know the reason behind this, lets call the President to findout". I went to make the call advising Mr Ranjith and Susiri malli not to get panicked. Usually whenever I wanted to meet the President or when he wanted to meet me we would directly telephone each other. We never used the service of a secretary for this purpose.

* * *

During 1967 and 1969 I invited Mr J R Jayewardene for Gandhi centenary celebration where he participated and delivered good speeches. However, I came to know Mr Jayewardene while he served as the Minister of State during Mr Dudley Senanayakes government. His secretary Mr Berty Wijeygunawardene who is a close friend of mine introduced me to Mr Jayewardene. I had the habit of taking

Sarvodaya books, which were published in India, from my library to him and bringing them back once read. Therefore, I was not a stranger to him.

* * *

From 5.30 in the evening till 8.00 in the night I tried to telephone Ward Place. Mr Amarasinghe and Susiri malli stayed with me. Eight times I was told the President will receive the call followed by the excuse that due to a sudden visitor that I should call back later. It was clear that someone was preventing my calls from reaching the President. It was confirmed as we got the same excuse, twice, when the call was directed through the Presidents House. In the end I stopped the telephoning requesting an answer for a letter which I will be sending by 7.00 in the morning. This was the only occasion that the President did not answer my direct calls to him.

Mr Ananda Chittampalam, who was with us those days, was with the greatest difficulty persuaded to accept the delivery of the welcome speech. I pacified Dr Ranjith and Susuri malli to continue with the celebrations with ease of mind and that I would be leaving Colombo for a few days. But for an educated man of Dr Ranjith Amarasinghe's caliber this inferior act coming from a President was incomprehensible. His fallen face would not change and I had to persuade them to go home around 9.00 in the night.

I sent the letter to the President around 7.00 in the morning with my second son, Jeevan Dhammika. I wrote that as he has informed through Dr Ranjith Amarasinghe I will not be attending the ceremony and for him to participate for the celebrations and make it a success.

Further I requested an interview with him to be enlightened on the reasons behind his instructions which would help our mutual understanding.

If I had not taken such a step and consequently if the President had not attended the ceremony it would have resulted in Justice Minister Nissanka Wijeyeratne and the secretary to the Ministry of Justice, Dr Ranjith Amarasinghe tendering their resignation as they both were men of honour. Therefore, I asundered my ego and refrained from attending the ceremony. Next day before dawn I left to Anuradhapura. I went to the temple of Ven. Hamangoda Ariyawansha Thero and meditated. I worshipped and meditated in Sri Maha Bodhi, Ruwanweliseya and at Mihintale. On the third night I returned home.

The launch of the book 'The Supreme Court of Sri Lanka' had been a success. On no occasion has there been a distinguished gathering of legal personnel as was seen at this ceremony. All of them had enquired on my absence and when they learnt the truth their respect for me had just soared. The gatherers were intelligent enough to measure the propriety of the Presidents action of forbidding me a ceremony organized by Sarvodaya in order for him to attend.

Playing with Fire:

On the 04th I received a letter from Assistant Secretary to the President stating that a meeting with the President has been arranged for the 14th at 12.00 noon at the President's Office.

From the 10th December 1986 to 10th September 1987 about once every two weeks I used to telephone the President and discuss for hours on

subjects such as peace. Never have we arranged to meet through a letter or a secretary before. It was his way to summon me on just the request of a telephone call. He knows that I am not a member of the UNP or a devotee of his. But he valued my service as an impartial party.

I remember how he consulted me on his speech before leaving for the peace talks in Bangalore.

I said "Recollect how you participated for the freedom fight with Mahatma Gandhi and Sri Nehru. Make full use of your knowledge on history." With a broad smile he thanked me comprehending. I later learnt that Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was enticed by this speech on that day.

* * *

A couple of weeks prior to 01st of July I learnt that the government is secretly enquiring on me. According to what my friend Dr Rasaputhram has revealed in Bangkok to another friend of mine, the government has instructed to secretly inform the President's Office of any cheque cashed by Sarvodaya exceeding Rs 10,000. This development had been from last April. In June I learnt from a high ranking official in the police that information is being collected by the state in order to imprison me.

Again I learnt that Prime Minister R. Premadasa had stated during a meeting with some M.Ps, that he will make me kneel down since I refused to participate in Gam Udawa program. Half of our property in

Campbell place has been fenced under the instructions of the Prime Minister and has been donated to Wesley College.

Meanwhile there was gossip in Kandy that I have been shot dead. Something good happened out of this too. Ven. Sumedha Thero who was a Swiss, suffered from a cancer. He was carried for treatment to a hospital in Kandy where he heard the news. The Thero who suddenly pushed away the assistants who were aiding him to walk and had said, "After my teacher Gnanaseeha Thero it was Dr Ariyaratne whom I went to for anything. If he had died it is immaterial whether I live or die." Thus he has gone back direct to the cave he was living in Katugastota even without waiting for the consultation of the doctor. I learnt all this only in June.

Anyhow I was suspicious of a government conspiracy against me.

On the 1st of July I met the Prime Minister at the marriage ceremony of Kamal Waleboda malli. Together with Prime minister I was a witness for the wedding. Again we met at the Board meeting of the Gramodaya Trustees and twice in the night at Temple trees, for his requirements, during the course of the week. As such I did not think that he had any animosity towards me. Yet, the political tastes and the behavior of politicians is incomprehensible to us.

On the 14th of July at noon I went to the President's office and exactly at 12.04, I was summoned before him. He was seated at his table while in front of him the Presidential Secretary, Mr Manikdiwela was also seated. The presence of the Secretary I gathered to be an ill boding. He had been present at ward place on 02nd of December to wreck the peace walk and again on the 06th of the same month it was him who prevented

the President from participating for the Kirivehera Peace Walk in Kataragama.

"Why is this, Ariyaratne?" the President asked.

"That is what I am here to ask. Why did you insult me and pained me?" I said.
"We have learnt that you are working against the Prime Minister and the Government"

"If it is so why didn't you directly enquire me of this without insulting and paining me?"

"I have been trying to contact you for a while now and you have been avoiding me"

The president looked at Mr Manikdivela, who in turn spoke looking away. "Why, how many times I telephoned you? You never returned the calls" I was certain that this person was lying; so I replied with a raised voice.

"Mr Manikdivela, look me directly in the eyes. I get telephone messages daily from around the world. And I receive all of them. It is a wonder that you were unable to get through to me. Look at me; talk looking in to my eyes. See Mr President, this man is a liar. You wrecked our Peace Walk in 1983."

"No. No".

"No. you stopped the President's visit. When I was conducting the meditation you stopped me and ordered to talk to you. When I refused,

you went and poisoned the Presidents mind. You people are the ones that destroyed this man, and this country!"

"We destroyed the country? Can't you see the development?"

"If you want to test lets go to Pettah without your bodyguards; if you come back alive, then you have developed the country!" I knew I was playing with fire. Even though the President wanted to interrupt without allowing him I continued with what I was saying."

"Mr. President this man is a liar. He didn't send me any messages nor did he telephone me. If a message was sent to the police station in Moratuwa I would have come in half an hour. I am really sorry that you insulted and pained me without first enquiring for the truth. It's wrong of you. Since of recently the CID has surrounded me and my telephone was tapped. If I was against the Prime Minister, how could I have met with him four times last week? He could have told me then. Last night also from 9.00 to 11.30 I was with him at Temple trees, couldn't he have told me then, if I was against him?"

Boon from Ravaya:

Now, like a sly cat Mr Manikdiwela is opening a file and taking out a magazine of Ravaya. I know it is the December 1987 issue. Now he reveals the trump and tries to speak; I continued what I was telling.

"It was wrong of you to pain and insult me, Mr Manikdiwela read that CID report; what have I done? Have I cheated money? Have I taken bribes from foreign countries? No. Of course I didn't participate for Gamudawa ceremony. That was my decision. I have the right to decide to go or not to."

Now Manikdiwela is turning the pages in Ravaya.

"Look at this picture of the President in Ravaya looks like a demon. I should protect my President."

"The President is not only yours. He is everybody's President. I also want to protect him, from people like you. Mr President do tell have I asked for any favors from you for Sarvodaya or for myself?"

"When Felix Dias Bandaranayake was harassing you we gave you protection and we gave you land."

Mr President, Felix didn't harass or insult us as much as this Government does. He was direct in his attack. We retaliated. Madam, (Mrs Bandaranayake) intervened and made peace.

The President, bent across the table towards me. He wetted his lips. Slowly in a threatening tone he said, "Ariyaratne you should remember our party is very powerful. We are the most organized and powerful political party so far. We are equipped with the most modern weaponry."

"Sir is it the Party or the Government?"

"No no. Our Party. Our people tried to destroy Ravaya. To burn down the Sarvodaya printing press. But owing to the trust we have in Sarvodaya I didn't allow it. We don't want to start a fight with Sarvodaya. I know of the good deeds Sarvodaya does and the respect it receive internationally. We don't want to tarnish all that. Stop the Ravaya."

Meanwhile Mr Manikdivela reads the editorial. He now turns the pages and reads snippets from the magazine. I stopped him.

"Mr Manikdiwela neither you nor the President can comprehend those. Get it read by the intellectuals in your Party to shed light on the matter. What the article means is to instead of trying to topple governments from hiding behind in jungles, to come forward in an open democratic manner. Anyhow, why don't you get the editor of Ravaya to resolve the matter? True, I helped establish Ravaya, but it is not a publication of Sarvodaya. You can complain to the newspaper publisher's board or take court action. Is not that the democratic way?"

Manikdivela speaks threateningly. I answered back.

"Mr Manikdivela, do not threaten me. The time I was afraid of those is long gone. You can imprison me torture me and even kill me. At present you do this to our brethren but you cannot destroy my virtues. My movement is already rooted in millions of hearts. Perhaps my corpse would serve this country more than my living self. Falsehood, violence and lawlessness are short lived. My efforts are not directed at making or breaking governments but to change the present society using methodologies of non violence and creativeness. I am not surprised that you don't understand this."

Mr Manikdivela is silent now. He gets up from the chair and reaches a nearby table. He starts rummaging through files; His action was to calm his mind than actually for the need of a document. I turned towards the President. He returns to the fatherly approach that he usually uses with me.

"You know I like you I consider you to be a friend of mine"

"Same here sir, but why do you insult and cause pain to friends?"

"No. No. I haven't any enmity against you or Sarvodaya, the problem is Ravaya. Stop this; I can stop it if you say so. I have no intention of being antagonistic towards Sarvodaya." Again the President said in a threatening tone.

I patiently explained about Ravaya and Victor Ivan. I also assured him that as soon as I leave I will be speaking with him and begged that not to consort to acts of terrorism. Tried to convince him; that since people are now aware of the State terrorism the situation would continue unforeseeably. Also promised him, that I would advise Victor to refrain from criticizing the Government and requested that Victor malli be given an interview as soon as possible. Although he refused this at first, later I realized that he didn't mind it. Somehow I knew I jumped this hurdle also. The silence of Mr Manikdivela evinced that the problem was resolved, at least temporarily.

Our duty is only to meditate:

"Sir people like us have only the blessings of meditation, do you practice meditation?

"No I have no time"

"You must find time. All these issues arise for those state leaders who do not meditate."Your son Ravi is a very good teacher of meditation. Why don't you learn from him? Besides now you are past the age of 80."

Now Mr Manikdivela seated at the long table keeps turning pages of files. I turned towards him.

"Mr Manikdivela isn't it good for you if you also meditated a bit?"

The President smiled for the first time. A cynical smile crossed Mr Manikdivelas face.

"I have no time for those"

"Do not say like that, even if nobody else in this country meditated a person who is closely associated with the President should practice meditation."

When I said so, even Mr Manikdivela couldn't help smiling. I understood that our friendship was not tarnished by the previous argument.

The President got up. So did I.

"May the Triple Gem Bless You President. Hereafter if there is anything to tell me, please telephone directly."

On the way out I tapped Mr Manikdivela on the back saying "Mr Manikdivela I will take your leave, please practice meditation ok?" So I left in good spirits.

Outside the chambers there were about 20 security personnel in civil clothes. May be they too would have heard what I said as I had spoken so loudly. One of them took me down in the elevator. I gave my second son Jeevan, who was impatiently awaiting my return, an all's well wink, and climbed inside the car, and we left at 12.45p.m.

Later on I learnt certain other incidents related to my visit. On 02nd of July, on the day of the book launch, around 10.30 in the morning Mr Ranjith Amarasinghe and Minister of Justice Mr Nissanka Wijeratne were summoned to the Presidents resident at Ward Place. There also, he has spoken ill of me as a person working against him, the Prime Minister and the Government. He had said that if I would rebuke him during the event that he would retaliate as well. Mr Nissanka Wijeratne has responded saying that they thought that the President and me to be best of friends, and has further explained that the whole affair could be a misunderstanding. Also, he has gone to the extent of praising me. Dr Amarasinghe has told of my intention of not attending the function and that I had informed of it today morning at 7.00 via a letter.

Anyhow the letter had not been handed over to the President until then. When they were searching for the letter only the Secretary had produced it. First the President had silently read it and then had read for the audience to hear commenting "A well written letter". Then Dr Amarasinghe had informed that I left Colombo.

Perhaps what the President had really intended was to rebuke me and express his displeasure and not my absence from the function. But then it was too late for that.

The President had planned to stay for half an hour only but had waited at the function for one and a half hours. May be he realized that he was in the wrong as he had said, when getting in to the car to go back, "I will summon Ariyaratne".

I didn't speak of this with any journalist. However, during the previous week reporters from all the newspapers telephoned me wishing to know whether I was a presidential candidate in the forthcoming election. I was astonished and responded; so far I have had no such intentions. However, the newspaper 'Dawasa', who had learnt some clue about the incident, published half a page article with a clever analysis of the situation and with pictures of both the President and me. The readers of that article would have felt sympathy and praise towards me and not animosity.

Sinha Ratnatunge, in the Gulf News had published two long articles. Meanwhile "Attha" newspaper picking information from the "Dawasa" article had published a false distorted article without even mentioning my name or Sarvodaya, on their front page. "Attha" paper was a good supportive peg for the Government who had converted the profession of journalism into turpitude. Only the delinquent would have believed the falsehoods of "Attha". During the earlier government regime, also, "Attha" operated in the same manner supporting the reactionaries. At this juncture I remember a story once told to me by a Secretary of the American Embassy whom I met in London 15 years ago. "We are well aware of the socialistic policy followed by this political party. About 12 people from their central committee are recipients of payments from the CIA. They are blaming people like you only to cover their own nakedness." Likewise as if to cover their action, two days afterwards, "Attha" had published an article covering the speech I gave at the funeral of Nadalagamuwe Jinananda Thero, giving it every prominence in their paper.

People or events are of no great importance to me. It's the thoughts behind, conveyed by their action, which matters. We are distancing

ourselves from being the civilized humans destroying our country, our nation and our religion due to the degraded thoughts of such people. Therefore, we should let the society know the truth as it is, without getting purturbed by the action of a few such people. For this purpose I wrote the book "Bala Pyramidaya and Dharma Chakraya" within three weeks and instructed Vishva Lekha to publish it. I entrusted the English translation to Mr D. B. I. P. Siriwardena before taking a trip overseas.

Further, I expect Ravaya magazine, which was established under full patronage of Sarvodaya and me, to accomplish the task I undertook, without any influence from me.

The Wish to Serve the People and Selfishness

Presidential Election: 1988

Once the day of nominations for the Presidential Election approached Mr Premadasa paid me a couple of visits. His purpose of these visits was to find out through me what the opinion of President J. R. Jayawardena on the nominations was and also, Mr Premadasa asked me to speak with the President on behalf of himself. Mr Premadasa knew that the President regarded my opinion, even though I was not a UNP member or any other party member, for that matter. Further, he requested me to speak with Mr Gamini Dissanayake and Mr Lalith Athulathmudali regarding the same as they were my close friends. I discussed the matter with the President and Mr Gamini Dissanayake. However, I had no opportunity to discuss the same with Mr Lalith Athulathmudali.

Since I gathered that the President has decided upon the nominations, as I recall, one Friday morning I telephoned Mr Premadasa and informed that definitely he would receive nominations for the election as the candidate of UNP. On that night Mr Premadasa telephoned and thanked me as he had received the nomination forms.

I sent him the following letter.

16th September 1988

Hon'ble Prime Minister
Mr R. Premadasa
Temple Trees
Colombo.

Dear Hon'ble Prime Minister,

I express my happiness over the nominations you received from your party as its candidate in the Presidential Election. Victory or defeat is not that important. What is important is the manner of competition. From today, in your fight, establish the great democratic traditions. Bring up to a clean, respectable level the badly fallen political field. It is my honest belief that you possess the personal strength to accomplish this task.

May the Triple Gem Bless you and may the Gods protect you and may you meet with success.

Yours in service,

A T Ariyaratne

During this period at least twice a month I went overseas on Sarvodaya activities. Especially during the election time I was abroad. I specifically instructed everyone at Sarvodaya to act impartially during this period.

Just a few days prior to the election, the play "Sakvithi Rawana" by Arisen Ahubudu, was staged at BMICH. The Chief Guest for the event was presidential candidate Mr R. Premadasa. I also joined the guest list. He called me onto the seat next to him and informed that he would be leaving in ten minutes and that he needed to meet me. We arranged to meet immediately at the temple of the late Ven. Panadure Ariyawansa Thero at Wijerama Mawatha.

I came through Wijerama road while Mr Premadasa came through the parallel gate at the back. Both our vehicles were parked outside the temple and only both of us went into the temple premises. He spent several minutes showing me various sections of the temple finally indicating a room within where he suggested that we sit on some low chairs and start our discussion. He enquired about the election. I explained to him that Sarvodaya is unable to take political sides as it will be against our principles and that if the lives of our employees get entangled in politics that they would be in danger and also later on we will not be able to work unitedly if political differences are thrown in to hinder their work. Mr Premadasa's reply was that his victory is certain and therefore Sarvodaya should not be afraid to openly support him.

In any case, he requested that I speak at least at one meeting. I expressly explained to him that since I have never spoken in a political meeting before that his request is not at all entertainable. I assured him that I too believe that he would win the election; and by not getting involved in politics that it would be possible for Sarvodaya to support development programmes of his government better. I explained to him that I could help in two ways for his government. One was in eradicating poverty from the society and the other is building peace in Northern Eastern and Southern areas of the country. Mr Premadasa still was not satisfied. He further went on to say that he will arrange a non political meeting and wanted me to participate side by side with him to be publicized to the people to convince the nation that Sarvodaya and I are on Mr Premadasa's side.

I was nonplussed at these words as so far Mr Premadasa had not expected to use me politically. I asked, isn't this a request against my

conscience? He stood up turned towards me and said, "Alright none of that is necessary. I will give you the opportunity to build a Sarvodaya community in this country with government power. I will most certainly become President. You need not be on any political stage. I can appoint you to the parliament through the National list and give you all the power bestowed upon me. Then this will ensure that the 30 years of your life serviced to build Sarvodaya will be fruitful". So far I kept my patience and spoke rationally, but at this point for a moment I lost control of my emotions. "Hon'ble Prime Minister, I am sorry all this while you have associated with me you have not been able to understand me. I have not sought power or wealth or fame this far. Nor will I seek those in the future. I am on a spiritual journey. It is through spiritual power that I seek to change myself and others and thereby build a Sarvodaya community. This is my vision. It cannot be achieved through party politics. It is a religious mission that should be approached through annihilating the hunger for power or wealth; it should be done through selfless sacrifice. People with state power can aid in this endeavor. But, I consider this attempt to pull me in to politics by entices such as offering of your powers, as an insult. As I understood my association with you all this while was for the fulfillment of a common goal to help people and not selfishly to seek to complete egoistic desires through you. Therefore forgive me. I will not become part of this party politics." Saying this I too stood up.

The Prime Minister who walked several steps looking up at the ceiling muttered 'Hm'. His parting words were, "Alright that is ok. In the coming couple of days if I needed to send you a message can you recommend a trustable person for the job?" I too followed him out of the room. At that moment I saw Mr Anton Alwis looking inside

through the back gate and at the same time I remembered his friend Mr Harsha Kumara Navaratne. I told Mr Premadasa that he could convey any message through Mr Alwis who would pass on the message to Mr Harsha Kumara Navaratne from whom I could receive the message. Prime Minister called Mr Alwis. I repeated the arrangement to him. Then we left with Mr Premadasa leaving through the rear gate and I through the front gate towards home.

Next day I advised Harsha Kumara Navaratne to immediately convey any message Mr Alwis brings for me. Not even in my dreams did I think that Harsha Kumara Navaratne would become a close friend to Premadasa from that day onwards. But that was what happened exactly. I never imagined he would engage in politics and participate for the presidential campaigns travelling in the same helicopter or other vehicles together with Mr Gamini Dissanayake and Mr Premadasa. However, the unexpected happened.

The news about Mr Premsdasa's victory from the presidential election held on 20th December 1988 was announced the following day. That evening I telephoned "Sucharithaya" to congratulate the President. But he was not available.That night as soon as he learnt that I had called he returned the call. I said I called to congratulate him. Further I requested him to bring an ending to the violence and injustice and to govern the country with righteousness. He thanked me and hung up the receiver with the request to aid him to do according to my advice.

I sent the following letter to the President on 20th December, 1988.

20th December 1988

H. E. The President Mr R. Premadasa
Sucharitha Mawatha, Colombo 13.

Dear H. E. The President,

You have proved that a person possessing humility, will power, unshaken intention, great self confidence, exemplary organizational strength and the like, is able to withstand any obstacle and be victorious at the end. This is a joyful occasion for us. You will be further endowed with more strength to work for the country. Your Excellency's victory is a victory for the nation.

Sarvodaya and myself pledge our full support to you and wish you physical and mental strength to maintain law and order of the country, protect human rights, and make way for people to perform their duties by humanity, chase away organized violence and individual violence using spiritual and scientific strength, get people used to a no poverty no affluence society, replace production centered economy with a people's participatory economic system, develop an agreement based decision making political system as opposed to party political system and other areas demanding attention.

May the Blessings of the Triple Gem and protection of dewas be with you, your wife and children and the people working under you to help you steer the country away from the present chaotic state.

Wishing you all the best,
Yours in service,

A. T. Ariyaratne

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Let's Meet Later

A Duty for The New Leader

I was a member of the Gramodaya Trust Board of President Premadasa. Except for Mr Razak representing the Muslim community and Mr Chucky Wijayanathan representing the Tamil community and me, all other members were Cabinet Ministers. On December 28th 1988 at Janakala Kendraya, situated near the parliament building, I held a meeting of the Trusties Board. As the President of the Board, President Premadasa participated with his daughter. On other days it was my opinion that he enquired the most, but today he would not even look at me. He ended the meeting in just 20 minutes and accompanied by Mr Ravi Jayawardane and some others went visiting different departments of the Janakala Kendraya. He turned towards me and said we'll meet later. But he did not seem pleased. I had a few words with Ms Dulanjali. Mr K H J Wijayadasa, the former secretary to the Prime Minister came towards me. I inquired of him if he would be receiving the post of Presidents Secretary. He replied "However how much hard we have worked, it does not appear that I am considered for this position". That instance I hurried towards where President Premadasa was walking and joined him. I said I have a few words to say and asked him not to forget Mr Wijayadasa, and then I bid him farewell and left. Everyone saw that I was the first to leave. On that day while the meeting was going on I prepared my letter of resignation. Next day, I signed and posted it to Mr Yasasiri Gunawardena.

By the end of 1988 my last official connections with the government ended. However, not even for a moment I thought this would be the end of Ariyaratne-Premadasa connection.

On these days everyone at home was infected with chickenpox. Therefore my practice of worshipping the Temple of Tooth Relic on the first day of every year had to be postponed. Another reason for this was the Presidential coronation ceremony which was being organized in a gala manner those days. I did not attend the Presidential coronation ceremony. One reason was my opinion that the seat reserved for me at the ceremony would bring disrespect to Sarvodaya and also for the fear that I would spread the chickenpox virus by mingling among the public.

A celebration, the like of which was never held in Sri Lanka before, took place for the coronation ceremony, based on the premises of the Temple of the Tooth Relic in Senkadagala region. I watched the ceremony via television. Not only Mr Premadasa but also Mrs Premadasa and the children too were staged in *Paththirippuwa* (The highest place of honour in the temple) for the ceremony; as a Buddhist I cannot accept this act as prudent. As the very first act of the second executive president of Sri Lanka Mr Rannasinghe Premadasa; who officially accepted office on 02nd of January 1988; visited the office of Mr Neranjan Wijeratne, (*Diyawadana Nilame*) at *Dalada Maligawa*; where he met with Mr Gamini Dissanayake and my nephew Mr Harsha Kumara Navaratne. At this moment the President has made a statement exactly contrary to the speech he had given moments ago on *Pathtirippuwa*. I was flabbergasted to hear he had made such a statement which in summary;

"I shall make Ariyaratne kneel in front of me within a week and take control of Sarvodaya under me." In secret I was given all the details of this statement first by Mr Neranjan Wijeratne and later by Mr Gamini Dissanayake. However, Mr Harsha Kumara Navaratne who was brought up by me since the age of nine and later worked under me and became a fulltime employee of Sarvodaya, did not entrust this information to me.

It was my habit every year on 31st December at 12.00pm to worship Sri Maha Bodhi and then directly reach Kandy to worship the Temple of Tooth Relic before commencing the work for the New Year. But due to the coronation ceremony I could worship Temple of The Tooth Relic only on the 04the of January. I meditated for half an hour in the back verandah in the downstairs after worshipping. I reached complete one mindedness and at this moment I had a strange vision. There was a large white screen. On it in red number 30,000 was written and it was of flowing dark red blood. While under meditation I analysed this. What came to my mind was people who perished suddenly due to bombings and gun shots are craving unable to be reborn and there mournful wandering spirits (*Pancha Upadhanaskandha*) would affect the weak minded people and cause a loss of 30,000 lives by the end of year 1989. This was a sign of admonition.

Our personality does not stay stable for even a nano second. We do not realize this changing state due to our ignorance. If explained according to Lord Buddhas teachings our personality is a combination of Five Aggregates (*pancha Upadhanaskanda*) functioning under the law of Dependant Origination (*Paticca Samuppada*) I am not aware if at a point of a sudden death, unless the mind has attained a high degree of spiritual maturity, if the victim is able to find the strength to control

and balance the Five Aggregates. There is possibility for their consciousness (*Vingnana*) to instead of acting in one direction to react in an opposite uncontrollable manner. Therefore, what I felt was, before rebirth these uncontrolled consciousnesses are capable of temporarily affecting the negative energies lodged in the consciousnesses of the living beings who have constantly opened there minds to fear, suspicion and hatred. While trying to analyze this picture, I remembered my friend Mr Bertie Seneviratne who was an ardent Buddhist. I thought of sharing this experience and hoping to obtain his views I directly went to pay him a visit.

I briefly explained to him- For the first time in Sri Lanka a leader was appointed from a non affluent family. If his tenure succeeded in the future there will be the opportunity for more people from non affluent families to rise as leaders. If his governance ends in failure these opportunities will be closed. I think, we as people of non violence and non political ideas the greatest service we could do to this new leader is to, release compassionate energies to the collective impure psycho sphere in the universe from places such as the high forest mountains near the Temple of Tooth Relic. We should give help through these compassionate energies to the victims who lost lives suddenly with these conflicts and help them to absorb the positive energies and release them to find a rebirth. People like you and I who practice meditation should do this duty by our new leader and for the peace in this country. I requested Mr Seneviratne to contact those who practice meditation and get them to release positive energies in these areas.

Effort Towards A Settlement
Past, Future and this Moment

I understood that the President was angry with me from the speech he made at the Temple of the Tooth Relic. To prevent this from worsening I wrote him the following letter seeking for a settlement, on 07th January 1989. I handed it over to his personal Secretary Mr Wijedasa on 15.01.1989.

7th January 1989

H.E. the President Mr R. Premadasa
President's Office
Colombo 1.

His Excellency the President,

In addition to the two letters I sent you expressing my joy on your victory which enabled you to be the Executive President of Sri Lanka, I have to request your forgiveness for writing a letter of this nature as you stepped on to the most prestigious position in the country. I am due to leave Sri Lanka for a brief period to take up an assignment overseas.

At the last meeting of the Gramodaya Board I realized you have distanced yourself from me. What I heard from persons close to you also confirmed my doubt about it. I decided to write this letter so that our friendship so far maintained would not be marred. It is all the more important that I have not at any stage made use of your kindness for personal gain or for any benefits to Sarvodaya Movement and this I wish to continue to the future too.

1. Some privileged persons desire a rift between Your Excellency and myself. If yourself, possessing State power and myself, through Sarvodaya, keen on the development of the unprivileged population do not work hand in hand, then it is for their benefit. Although our aim is the same the means are different such as the technologies and organizational structure. This should not bring us apart but closer. As I treaded an independent path devoid of party politics, I was at the receiving end of injustice for the past 35years. I should be rid of this injustice, at least under your government. If any actions of mine are not clear to you, it is best that they are cleared (through telephoning) and our journey of serving the people can continue uninterrupted. So far both of us have not been that distant to communicate through a third party.

2. I believe in and prefer spiritual connection, which is strong, to display external loyalties, and showing goodwill at psycho social level. Our association with each other is at spiritual level. That is the reason why I meditated in my shrine room and sent compassionate rays of spiritual energies to you, to your family, the government you will establish and to the general public, when you took oath from *Paththirippuwa,* as was done by me when the former President took oath at *Paththirippuwa.* There is ample room for self-seekers to poison your mind about my being absent from the celebrations. During those days my family was suffering from a contagious disease which fact may have been hidden from you.

3. Over a period of 35years, my workers and me developed Sarvodaya, took the responsibility in 1956 and by 1988 October handed the administration and project activities to the next generation. At their insistence I am the President and in a little while I will handover that

too to the next generation. We receive perfect joy when we relinquish what we have built. I have now focused my attention on reading, writing, spiritual activities and wherever possible to be a teacher and a community worker. I have informed all sections and units of Sarvodaya to extend their full support to your progamme of Alleviating Poverty. Whichever part of the world I am in; there will never be any opposition to your work from me or the Movement. In fact it will be support which you will receive.

4. Being a member of the Gramodaya Fund is the only official connection I have, and if you have the slightest displeasure, I shall not be a burden to you. I shall resign.

5. Two days back, I met the former President and wished him all the best. I said sorry to him, if, during the past 11 years, especially July 14th I hurt his feelings personally. In the same manner, if I, intentionally or unintentionally brought you pain of mind I am sorry about it. If on any occasion what I may have said about my country, according to my conscience had made you sad, taking it personally, I beg your forgiveness. Even a thought of mine was not meant to hurt you, but bless you.

6. I have got tens of thousands of young men and women, to rid themselves of bad behavior, frightening ethnic conflicts, poisonous party politics, violence and greed for power and directed them in the path of serving their motherland. During the past five years, especially the last one and half years I had to protect their lives. In doing so, I risked my own life. Looking back, whatever attitudes others may carry in them, I get altruistic joy. In a properly designed Deshodaya activity you will receive their generous support. During your rule, please look after them and obtain their services for the

well being of the people. To give lead to your historic revolution, you would never find a better group than these dedicated people who will suit the action to the word.

7. Early last month, I lost all my money in Indonesia and I had to borrow money. To pay my debts I have to work for some time. My first assignment will begin on 30th January. Although my state of health is not satisfactory, I have to support my family and myself to continue my service to people. In the future, while I am in Sri Lanka from time to time, I will be involved in helping people to awaken their spiritual strength. I will do all I can to help people to return to their normal, peaceful, non-violent life styles. I hope you will extend to me your kind and compassionate support as was available to me always.

8. In 1971 and in 1983, tens of thousands of people who lost their lives suddenly were not fortunate enough to receive merit and continue their re-birth process. These entities are roaming as unhappy spirits in the mind realm. To this number, even today is added about 40 a day. In order to reduce the number of persons (the weak minded) who are put into confusion by these unhappy entities, positive compassionate energies should be released for them to get out of their unhappy state. As you are aware of people who possess the required spiritual strength you can get them to perform this duty. Please do not treat this lightly. When I meet you I will tell you what was revealed to me.

9. You would recall my invitation to you; visit our headquarters in an unofficial capacity. It is unfortunate that the prevailing situation in the country prevented me from receiving you at our headquarters. Anyway, past is memory, future is hope, only the present matters. I

bid you goodbye as a true friend of yours. If there is any service that I should be giving please let me know. I shall come and do my duty silently and voluntarily.

10. As I am not certain whether you received my previous two letters of good wishes, I shall be grateful for an acknowledgement to this letter. As I am leaving the country on 25th January please accede to my request. Trusting me from the depth of your heart, if you need my services, I am there to join you in serving the people according to the values I believe in, devoid of any expectation. Please convey my best wishes to the First Lady and the children.

I wish from the bottom of my heart that may you receive the service from faithful friends and may you be blessed by the Triple Gem and the Gods to lead the Sri Lankan people towards the oasis of peace and harmony.

Thank you,

Yours in service,

A. T. Ariyaratne.

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The Judgement Should be Given by People
A Statement to the CID

A few days later on the 11th of January 1989 Mr Shirni Wijesuriya, who is the Deputy I. G. P. of the CID information unit telephoned me.

He said that the President has ordered to investigate a statement I had made and even though reluctantly, that he has to perform his duty by meeting me. I was greatly shocked by hearing this. However, I did not show this and consented to come and meet him within half an hour's time at his office.

I went to Ward place and as I stopped the vehicle at the CID office, Mr Wijesuriya with few more officers came to the vehicle to welcome me and with much respect received me to his office. Everybody was shocked about this investigation and looked at me with sympathy. Only Mr Shirny Wijesuriya and I remained in the room. This was the question he had for me:

"The President has learnt that you have made a statement that a genocide of about 30,000 would be done this year. How did you get this information?"

I asked "Where have I done this statement at?" He answered "It was in Kandy".

I suddenly remembered the discussion I had with Mr Seneviratne. It made me smile. I made this statement only to Mr Seneviratne. Somehow this has been interpreted incorrectly and has reached the

President. I explained the entire incident to Mr Shirny Wijesuriya which he comprehended well. It was an incident of mirth for both of us. However, when I exited the room I was feeling heartbroken .This investigation report might still be available in the secretary's office of the Ministry of Defense.

After a few months while abroad I received the sad news that suddenly Mr Bertie Seneviratne had passed away due to a heart attack. Therefore, I couldn't inquire on the truth about the previous incident. However, as everybody now know, the prediction I made that more than 30,000 would perish in the year 1989 became true.

The investigation that started with Mr Shirny Wijesuriya was only the beginning. From that day onwards all government institutions including the CID started to attack me personally and our organization as well. I did not inform these incidents to any one at first, but because the attack on Sarvodaya continued throughout the country during a period of a holocaust, I decided that it was not circumspectious any more to keep quiet. Therefore, on 12th March 1991 I printed and distributed the following statement all over the country.

"I together with our Sarvodaya brotherhood have sacrificed the best time of our lives for the service and the benefit of the people of this country. During the last few decades if the politicians who spoke of people's welfare from high raised stages had done there duty well there would be no requirement for organizations such as Sarvodaya to exist to fulfill people's needs. But the judgment of this we give on to the people themselves.

I announce with the utmost regret how the government officials misused the entire governing system to cause pain to me and Sarvodaya during the past two years devising the following snares.

1. Within a week of the swearing in of our new President I was summoned for questioning by the chief of the CID Investigations Department.

2. The radio broadcasting of our weekly Sarvodaya programme was terminated suddenly.

3. In June 1990 the Bribery Commissioner sent me a list of inquiries which I replied to. However, up until now my name has not been cleared of any of the allegations nor has any confirmation of the reception of the reply being acknowledged.

4. The publicizing of special events of our organization via television and radio were completely stopped. Even events where the Prime Minister and Ministers participated were being prohibited from media promotion.

5. These media got the opportunity and endless time to criticize and humiliate me publicly but they had no time for publicizing any of the good deeds that were actioned by me. Yet, the international media gave publicity for my deeds. In July 1990 in Oslo Norway, I received the August Forrel International Prize from the International Teetotalers Association; and in November I received the Jamnalal Bajaj International Peace award from India which were both ignored by the government media.

6. The number of CID investigation that was notified to me was uncountable.

intervened to help evacuate several Tamil civilians

Arular who said former EDF MP Pararatner was the last British Mayor of Colombo.

Lanka last week is among the earliest applicants for

SUNDAY TIMES 1990.12.30

Sarvodaya chief hits out at "dirty politicians"

Sarvodaya Leader A.T. Ariyaratne has challenged the government to prove allegations, against the Sarvodaya movement made by people whom he described as dirty politicians.

Addressing the annual general meeting of the Lanka Jathika Sarvodaya Shramadana Sangamaya at Moratuwa Mr. Ariyaratne said, neither he nor his movement was afraid of the government's move to probe the activities of the Non-governmental Organisations operating in the country.

"I ask the government to place before courts whatsoever it has discovered against Sarvodaya so that we could be punished if we have committed any offence," the Sarvodaya leader told delegates.

In a hard-hitting speech Mr. Ariyaratne lashed out at the government controlled media, accusing it of trying to discredit his movement.

He predicted a day would come when the Sarvodaya movement would be compelled to hit back at the 'dirty' politicians who had obstructed its work.

"There is the possibility of the person called Ariyaratne disappearing from the scene mysteriously. "But," by "eliminating a person one cannot kill a movement like Sarvodaya." Dr. Ariyaratne said.

"Therefore I have decided to decentralise the activities of the movement from next year" he added.

The Sarvodaya leader disclosed that donor countries had refused to give aid to the movement this time.

President Premadasa recently appointed a commission headed by former Supreme Court Judge R.S. Wanasundara to probe all activities of the NGOs operating in the country. The move followed information that certain NGO funds had allegedly been utilised for acts detrimental to the interests of the country.

A statement on me about the Sarvodaya in "Sunday Times" News paper

7. The Lake House newspapers published criticizing and painful articles directly or indirectly accusing me and Sarvodaya on 25.12.1990 (Daily News and Dinamina), 27.01.1991 (Silumina), and 03.02.1991 (Sunday Observer).

The troubles and pains, me and my family members had to go through, if needed, would be written later on. Since the hand that is disgracing me and Sarvodaya is clear and well known I shall leave the judgment in the people's hand.

However, I would like to bring on to your attention the regretful consequences of such principles and actions. How do these acts affect our community at large? The people who suffer under acute poverty are the helpless unfortunate ones who are disregarded and further penalized as the main result of these actions.

I have served my country with my whole strength. The people know this. It's a relief and a pleasure that my service has been widely recognized in the international arena. In addition to my services I have donated all the money to the people through Sarvodaya which I received through all the awards I ever received since the Ramon Magsaysay award in 1969. From the Bedouin award received in Belgium in 1982 for the international development, to Jamanlal Bajaj International Peace award in November 1990 all the money amounting to over hundred thousand American Dollars (Rupees 43 Lakhs) I have donated towards people who work towards achieving development and peace of the mankind. All these money which I have received personally have been put to the Sarvodaya Trust Fund which was legalized under the parliament Act number 31 of 1984. These funds have not been loaned to anyone.

This Sarvodaya Trust Fund is completely different to the Trust enacted under parliament Act number 16 of 1972.

Even though government media attacked us, we were happy about the establishment of a presidential commission to probe in to the activities of non-governmental organizations. This was because we expected this impartial commission that it would help us to achieve justice. But some who were impatient to find us guilty undertook a parallel infuriated mission of disgracing us using the commission as a scapegoat.

I am capable to face the five stages of ignorance embarrassment, disgrace, physical pain and respect faced by social servers by following the teachings of Mahathma Gandhi. Even under such circumstances I opt not to deviate from my principles. I will not bend

to any one's unjustly forcing. I live for a purpose. I have no job to lose. However, if I lose the right to serve the people in a within religious and lawful boundaries I will have lost everything. I believe that my country will not lose the virtues of serving the society with qualifications, ability and dedication.

A.T. Ariyaratne,
President,
Lanka Jathika Sarvodaya Shramadana Sangamaya,
Damsak Mandiraya,
Moratuwa.
1991.03.12

By April 1991 our safety was in further danger, therefore in order to face any situation I made a second public statement on 01st May 1991.

"On 12th of March 1991 I made a statement regarding the pains inflicted upon me, my family and the Sarvodaya organization by the leadership structure and the media under the government control. On 22 of March 1991 I invited local and international media for a press conference.

Yesterday midnight, after receiving 08 death threat calls from an unidentified party, I decided to make this second statement. It essential that I make this statement since this dangerous situation privately faced by my family today is a situation which was faced by many then and at present by fellow citizens of this country. With this statement I wish to bring to the notice of our members, the well-wishers and those who respect freedom and justice the situation under which we are living by and serving our people. Many who read my

first statement had sent messages of pity, caution, courage and brotherhood. Amongst them were local and foreign individuals, organisations government officers of human rights, religious leaders and our development aid agencies. I thank them whole heartedly.

Since 12th March 1991 the papers published by the Lakehouse, which was under the government control continued to spitefully tarnish the reputation of Sarvodaya and mine.

17.03.1991 (Sunday Observer), 12.03.1991 (Daily Observer), 21.04.1991 (Sunday Observer), 28.04.1991 (Sunday Observer), 28.04.1991 (Silumina), 28.04.1991 (Statement from Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation).

I have become the individual who is under the most public scrutiny and suspect by the Government at present even under incorrect reasons. The newspapers and media under the Government control are trying to build a negative public opinion against me and Sarvodaya using tampered news items. For example the falsehood published by Sunday Observer stated that 'Sarvodaya sell Sri Lankan children for profit'. We under the history of Sarvodaya has never given a single Sri Lankan child under our care to a foreigner. It was Sarvodaya who initiated to stand against such a corruption. Even today under the protection of powerful individuals such smuggling of infants is being continued.

අයවිය යුතු තිරූ බදු ගොඩ නිසාවෙන් මුදුණ යන්ත්‍රය රාජසන්තක කළා

(රවීන්ද්‍ර සමරසිංහ)

ලංකා ජාතික ශ්‍රමදන සංගමය (සවොදය) ගොන්නු මුදුණ යන්ත්‍රයට අයවිය යුතු තීරුබදු ගොඩ නිසියාවේ එම යන්ත්‍රය රාජසන්තක කරන්න ඉඩ නොදී රාජසන්තක කළ බව ඒ පිළිබඳ නඩුවේදී නිසිඳු නීතිඥ ඒ. ඩේ. ඩබ්. ගුණසේකර මහතා ශ්‍රේෂ්ඨාධිකරණය භාරයේ පැවසිය.

අගවිනිසුරු පී.පී. නෑස්, ද මිළඟා, යෝ. ඇම්. ඒ. ඕ. කුලතුංග, පී. රාමනාදන් යන ශ්‍රේෂ්ඨාධිකරණ විනිශ්චයකාරවරු පසුගිය නිසිය ගුණසේකර මහතාද සේ පැවසුවේ සවොදය ගොන්නුදෙ මිලයන්තුය නොදී රාජසන්තක කිරීමෙන් මුලිය අයිතිවාසිකම් උල්ලංඝනය කළ බව පවසමින් ඉදිරිපත් කළ පෙත්සමේ ඉදිරිපත් කළ ලේඛන ඇසිමි.

ලේඛ අධ්‍යක්ෂ පේනාරාල් ලලිත් තිස්ස හ. ජාතික අධ්‍යක්ෂ (ආනයන හා තීරුබදු) යේ. මාලේන්ද්‍ර මහතාට සහ නිසිඳු නීතිඥවරයා රිගුදන්තාරාරච්චි මහතා මෙම පෙත්සම ඉදිරිපත් කළේ ලංකා ජාතික ශ්‍රමදන සංගමයයි.

අයිතිය අහිමිකර තිබේ

පෙත්සම්කාර පොතුවෙන් යේ. ඩී. රාදිදෙණිය, ජාවිපි යුතුද යන නිසිඳු නීතිඥ ඒ. ඩබ්. ගුණසේකර මහතා විනිශ්චයකාර අධිකාරණය හිමුවේ කරුණු දක්වමින් මෙම මුදුණ යන්ත්‍රය රජය සතු සරෝදයේ මුලිය අයිතිවාසිකම් නඩුව

සරෝදය මුලික අයිතිවාසිකම් ප්‍රශ්න නිසිඳු නීතිඥවරු ඉදිරිපත් කළ බව පැවසිය.

එහෙත් මේ පෙර ශ්‍රේෂ්ඨාධිකරණ නඩු මඟින් ගන්නා ලද තීන්දු නිසිඳුයන් නිසා සියවිමට සහ ඒ සඳහන් ප්‍රශ්න තීරණ කිරීමට යෝග්‍ය මුලික අධිකරණ වරාසන්නරුන් ගැන, දේශාභිමානියන් බව සඳහන් කොට ඇති බවත් ඒ එය උල්ලංඝනය වූ බව පෙත්සමෙහි සඳහන් නොකරන බව ගුණසේකර මහතා කියා සිටිය.

ශ්‍රේෂ්ඨාධිකරණයේ නඩු තීන්දු මඟින් ලෙස සඳහන් කොට ඇසක් ආණ්ඩුක්‍රම වාරසාරයේ 4 වැනි වාරසාරය යනුවෙ රජයේ ආයතන වාරසාරයන් සඳහන් කොට ඇති මුලික අයිතිවරු නොව. එවා ක්‍රියාත්මක කළ යුතු බව පැහැදිලිවම සඳහන් කොට ඇති බවත් ඒ ක්‍රියාත්මක කළ යුතු බව සඳහන්වෙන්නේ නියම යන්ත්‍රය රාජසන්තක කිරීමේ මුලික අයිතිය පිළිබඳව පැමිණිලි කරන බව ගුණසේකර මහතා අධිකාරණයට අවධාරණය කළේය.

නිත්‍යානුකූල ලෙස ක්‍රියා කළ

සවොදය සෙන්මංරියයෙන් මුදුණයෙන්තුයක් ගෙන්වීමට නිත්‍යානුකූල මඟක් සොයුතු කළ බවද, මේ සඳහා ජනාධිපති විශේෂයෙන් පාසල් පිළුන්ටත් ඉතා අඩුමිලකට පොත්පත්තුවා සිටුවීමට අත්‍යවශ්‍ය ශුණවලින් යුත් රාජාණියක් ක්‍රියාත්මක කිරීම සඳහා මෙම යන්ත්‍රය රාජාණය කළ බවද ගියිඳු ගුණසේකර මහතා දැඩිකරණයට කරුණු පැහැදිලි කරමින් සිටියා.

ඉතාම උසස් තට්ටමේ මුදුණ තාක්ෂණය මඟින් මුදුණ කරයුතු තිබීම සඳහා ගොන් වූ මෙම යන්ත්‍රය, රේගුවෙන් ප්‍රවේසනුකූලේ සහිත විනිශ්චයාගය අදියරෙන් තක්සේරු කළ පදනම මත රේගු තීරුබදු ගෙවීමට 52 වැනි දේදය අනුව බව නිසිඳු ගුණසේකර මහතා පැවසිය.

ලක්ෂ 30 ක තීරු බද්දක්

මෙය රජය සතු තිරිමල පෙර ගෙනුවූ රජයට ලක්ෂ 30 ක තීරු බද්දක් ගෙවූ බවද එය ගෙවා ගැනීමෙන් පසු රන්ගුණ රජාණෙන් ගෙනෙන්වූ බව පරීක්ෂණ දෙසැස් පවසා මෙම තීරණය ගත් බව නිසිඳු ගුණසේකර මහතා කියා.

ආණ්ඩුකාරයා රජයට ගෙන්වා ගැනීමට ඉඩදුන් මිණ්ඩලයෙන් මෙවැනි පරියේෂණ පවත්වා එය රජය ඉල්ලා නිලධාරීන් සරණ බවද මෙම පරීක්ෂණ දෙසැස් නිසාවූ නියෝජ්‍ය පොලිස්පතිවරයකු වූ ලෝරන්ස් මහතා පැමිණිලෙන් මෙය නිලධාරී මට්ටමේ දී සිදු වූවකින් පෙරළු නියෝගයක් අනුව සිදු වූවක් බව පැහැදිලි යැයි නිසිඳු ගුණසේකර මහතා පැවසිය.

නිසිඳු ආර්. කේ. ඩබ්ලිව්. ගුණසේකර

මෙක්වන ඉදිරි කාණ්ඩ දෙසැසෙහි පසුසේය නිසිඳු නීතඥ ආඳුන පෙනෙයි 52 වැනි විනාශිසිය මත පවත්වනු ලබන ඔවුන් ඉදිරිපත් කළ ආණ්ඩුකරුවන් ඉදිරිපත් කළ බව පවසමින් ඉදිරිපත් කළ පෙත්සමේ

The negative publicity carried out on corrupted political agendas will not be able to influence the innocent minds of people who have worked tirelessly for decades with Sarvodaya. Perhaps, some living in urban towns who have no experience with Sarvodaya activities may fall for such continued intriguing false news items. I am extremely sorry for Lakehouse effort to hide the truth through such false hoods even when a Presidents commission has been established to gather information on Non-Governmental organisations.

In a time where the distance between law and justice is expanding, we can only put faith in the dharma teachings; The truth will win – 'Sathya mewa jayathe' and the one who walks the path of Dharma will be protected by Dharma- 'Dhammo bhave rakkathi dhammachari'.

Apart from these media attacks I and my family members are constantly being followed by unknown people in vehicles with changed number plates. Therefore, all my elder children has moved in with me in our home expecting to face any threatening situation that may arise.

Further, the CID officers has questioned our executive director and other senior officers. I should mention that the CID officers have done their duty with kindness during the questioning. However, it has come to my notice that some unknown groups claiming to be working under the Commission for NGOs has threatened our officers to give statements against me and Sarvodaya. We have brought such incidents to the notice of the authority. We have no way of identifying who such people are under the current situation.

However, how much dangerous it was, last few weeks I visited Sarvodaya villages and met thousands of villagers. I declare with pleasure that nowhere in the villages was there any reduction in the trust Sarvodaya had gained amongst the villagers. Even under all this pressure over 8000 people in villages continued on their development projects. My only pain was that the thousands of people who had no other means of help who came to Sarvodaya daily looking for some means of aid received limited help under the circumstances. The parliament ministers also send these people to us for aid. In a few days' time the provincial elections will be held. Whatever the threats Sarvodaya is inflicted to we will not take a political side. Our principle is to serve towards spiritual and social development according to Sarvodaya philosophy being politically neutral.

We will not be part of party power politics as we believe in people participatory democracy and has great respect for basic human rights. We don't have any wish to take revenge from people who keep bothering us.

The principles we lived by so far will continue to nourish the individual, family, society, country and the world long after our death and certainly after the lives of corrupt politicians and the self-centered people surrounding them have passed away. Sarvodaya is a noble exercise that will enlighten the lives of all including the lives of people who are discrediting us.

May all creatures be comfortable!

Win	revenge through compassion
Win	the corrupted person through dhamma
Win	the miserly through sacrifice
Win	the liar through truth

(Dhamma padaya)

A.T Ariyaratne,
President,
Sarvodaya Shramadana Sangamaya,
Damsak Mandiraya,
Moratuwa.
1991.05.01

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When Wielding Endless Power Even the Shadow will Frighten - A Nightmare -

I dreamt of Mr Premadasa several times from December 1992 to January 1993. While I was in Kathmandu I saw the tragic event of 01st of May 1993 in a dream exactly the way it happened in reality. During his tenure whatever the damage done to me and Sarvodaya by him, I only had had compassionate feelings towards him and I didn't stoop to the level of building hatred towards him. I adhere to the principle of remembering only the good a person has done to me.

In 1989 while I was in Uganda on a specialist mission from the World Bank I wrote to President Premadasa the following verse for his Birthday.

> "Honorable President, thoughts of old age crossed my mind, it comes to all one day. I wish you good health and long life. These words I write with a heavy heart."
>
> "May you receive the strength of nature, the power of spirituality and the protection of the Gods. From the bottom of my heart I wish for you, strength of mind and I wish that you may never let go of the way of Buddhism and be able to surpass all problems that come your way successfully."

"Ten years ago on a similar day when you won, I wished the same way for you. I tried to put to words the beautiful wishes I had in my mind for you. I thought of pathways of how to develop and protect our language and country through Buddhist teachings. We bowed to a nation free of treachery and free of benighted views."

"I walk this world with a will I made since mid-last year. I can endure the pains of body and mind due to practice of serenity I have achieved. I spend my days giving all and learning more, the results of which will benefit the underprivileged of this country one day."

"The comfort of following the Triple Gem surpasses power, office, stardom and praise. Therefore, influence the Sri Lankan society to uphold ways of the Triple Gem and protect the great dhamma on behalf of the people to bring in an era of freedom in the future."

"Never can good objectives be attained in wrongful ways. Please enlighten the people and throw away the fire arms to make our motherland again, a land of humanity while,, you becoming an agent of nobility that will shine with power of greatness."

When wielding an endless power even the shadow will frighten. That is because of the haunting fear of being robbed of the power they possess. If even a minute doubt arises about someone the domineering unconscious mind would induce to have that person destroyed

completely. It's no secret to all who remember that era that by the beginning of 1993 even the closest of his people was afraid of him. In every news paper, television or radio it was only his voice and his image that was dominating the media. Anyone else was heard rarely. The whole country was shaking in terror.

Even under such a situation without sacrificing my principles I tried at every opportunity to get connected with him to change the situation for the better. My main obstacles were the commission established going on any attempt at reconciliation and to mitigate the broken cord between us might have been perceived by him as well as others as maneuvers towards receiving personal favours and not looked upon as my sheer attempt to serve for the betterment of the country. It was my principle to be compassionate to the wrongdoer and to stand up erect and fight fearlessly and nonviolently against what was wrong.

We fearlessly carried forward the fivefold protective system launched by us. We had already informed the national and international relevant sources regarding our dangerous situation and the danger I personally and we as an organization were placed in.

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Persisting Resentment
Exemplary Good

Mr R Premadasa is an exceptional person. In determination I have not met any politician equal to him. Once Mahathma Gandhi stated all life experiences offered throughout its journey till its end should be considered as an education. In this way I have not known any other leader akin to Mr Premadasa who pursued all subjects he needed. How he articulated the English language skill is wondrous. There was no organizer comparable to him. His organizing skills were exemplary where he would look in to all details completely and precisely and implement them timely to the letter. There never was any postponing or tardiness in his routines. He awoke at dawn and till he went to his slumber at night he made full use of every minute that passed during the day.

Politicians should always associate and dwell among the common people. He mastered this skill better than any. For every Poya he would observe Ata Sil (eight precepts) at the places denoted as important for each Poya, where at these events thousands would congregate around him which made him popular. He knew that while benefitting spiritually material gain too is ensured.

He was clever in obtaining the best out of the skilled people. He was able to bring about a culture even among the government to perform their allocated duties well. He chose the talented disregarding party or cast or creed of a person. There was no drainage facility in Damsak Mandira at Sarvodaya Headquarters which was flooded frequently.

After trying every means I brought this issue to the notice of the Prime Minister. The next day early morning the Chairman and some officials from the National Water Supply and Drainage Board which was under Mr Premadasa's Ministry, visited me. Within a week, also with the aid of volunteers we were able to solve the drainage issue. To date this area is safe from flooding.

Once after reading a statement by Mr Premadasa in a news paper article, as usual I telephoned him at 5.00 in the morning. "As the Prime Minister of this country the speech published in the papers is not appropriate for your situation. You can rephrase it is in a better manner." I explained to him how he should change his speech. At this the Prime Minister laughed loudly, thanked me and that very day at a meeting delivered the speech the way I advised. Once it was published in the papers he called me and said laughing "There you are I corrected it".

Most occasions the officials who got blaggarded by him had the habit of relieving their pain with me. After ascertaining the truth behind these matters, had there been any unfair treatment I telephoned Mr Premadasa, if he was in the wrong, within 24 hours he would correct the position and telephone me back. He was as humble a person as such. If on any occasion I had telephoned and not been able to get through to him, he made sure to call back his earliest. Even the President J R Jayawardena had the same humble characteristic.

I reminisce many such occasions proving the efficiency and humble nature of Prime Minister R Premadasa. Not only me but others who associated him closely said that the Prime Minister who had such humble natures changed drastically once he became the President.

Many say that he had a need to create a personal history which did not exist. He did not build the mental capacity to refrain from being overwhelmed by the power inherent to the Executive Presidency and he was with the constant illusion that he was in the right which blinded him to all other opinions. These were some of the reasons that caused his change in nature.

Whatever said and done, as a person who associated with him in his early years as Prime Minister and as a person who gave up this association later, at times, I feel I neglected a duty. He used to heed my advice. He treated me with utmost love and respect. But whatever the reason behind for his offering of political powers to me; be it out of a pure honesty or opportunistically, even though I refused these; if I had continued my association with him, I sometimes think that it would have been possible to prevent most of the inhumane holistic acts that this country had to face during his reign.

I have revealed in another publication of the cruelties and the harassment Sarvodaya and I had to endure since his inception of power until his death. I do not throw the full blame on him. Our country is ample with politicians and officials who wait eagerly to be involved when a leader is displeased with a person, and imagining the harassment the leader would inflict take initiative, even without the knowledge of the leader himself, to execute the harassments beforehand.

There were some who for the betterment of the country step forward to make peace between me and Mr Premadasa. I recollect among them were Mr Bradman Weerakoon, General Cyril Ranatunge, Governor North and East General Nalin Seneviratne.

Meanwhile, during the latter part of November in 1992, I received two telephone calls from Mr Dayawansha Jayakody, who was a mutual friend of Mr Premadasa and me. He said that he was very stricken about the rift between me and Mr Premadasa and that he had an idea on how a settlement could be achieved. He believed it was a great misfortune for the country if I and Mr Premadasa were to continue with this discord as in his opinion Mr Premadasa was a great man and equally great was I. He offered to discuss this issue with Mr Premadasa if I had no objection to it.

When I was teaching in Nalanda, Mr Dayawansa Jayakody was a student in Ananda College and was one of my favorites. I knew him well. After leaving school he started the Dayawansha Jayakody book publishing house and became a successful businessman. Later he became a resident in America but returned from time to time to develop his company. Our friendship runs back 30 years and this assured me of his sincerity and I knew that he was associating with the President very closely.

I acknowledged him that I had no objection and revealed the effort I took to harness the broken cords of friendship back together. Also, I said that I at least have the right to know why we have been depraved and in this manner with revenge. He promised to speak with me again.

Last 20th he called me back. He had spoken with the President and said the issue was a minor matter. He requested me to withdraw the statement I had made and to convey this through a letter to the President. I explained to him that there were no such statements worthy of withdrawing as on no occasion with regards to Sarvodaya or national issues have I made any offensive statements. I explained to

him, besides all harassment originated from the President and that it is him who should withdraw such action. But he begged me to write a letter to the President. I told him that it was not suitable to do so while the Presidential Commision was in progress. However, he insisted that I give careful consideration to this matter.

I decided to write a letter, not to the President, but to my friend Dayawansa Jayakody making use of the free time I had while in India. It is irrelevant if he showed this letter to the President, or not. I wrote this letter and decided to post it when I go back to Sri Lanka on the 28th.

1992 November 27

Mr Dayawansa Jayakody
Colombo 10.

Dear Dayawansa Malli,

I thank you for the two telephone calls you gave me. What the Venerable Buddhist Clergy or the distinguished persons close to His Excellency the President should have done long time ago, you have now undertaken to do. This I consider a national need. Whether your efforts meet with success or not, I appreciate your endeavors as a true friend of the President and the country. Thank you once again.

For the well being of the nation and in order to face the various situations prevalent in the country today, it is my firm belief that there should be mutual understanding between the President and myself. In certain aims, policies, beliefs and principles, there is hardly any difference between the two of us. Yet there are wide differences in some other areas covering aims, policies, beliefs and principles. This

should not be an obstacle for persons who accept democratic methods and who respect personal interactions and individual personality.

Power, wealth, unwholesome perception and doubt are our enemies. Especially, when opportunists notice power and wealth in a person and being fully aware of the human weaknesses, for personal benefit, start on maneuvers to destroy healthy friendships. We have to be mindful not to get caught to them. What did happen here was, the maneuvers of opportunists winning the day. There is no doubt about it.

I have not by, using money, word of mouth or deed acted against the President during the Presidential Election. During that period, most of the time I was overseas. If someone were to state that I was involved in politics against him, it is a blatant lie. If anyone asked me anything, I have always mentioned about the assistance he has given us and in coming to power, how we could jointly serve the country.

I am not a betrayer. Betraying people in secret is not my style. If my mother was alive, she would explain our code of ethics. When she heard about the falsehoods and insults the media repeatedly published, in great sadness she went to bed and never got up. The only words she uttered were, "Why is Mr Premadasa doing these things to my son?" I told the President that I was disheartened about what happened at Kataragama Gam Udawa. I do not know whether this statement of mine touched him deeply. Ours was an open association. The situation in the country was getting more terror stricken.

On a day that the JVP declared curfew, they were so brutish as to threaten me, leaving a hand grenade on my table. But I did not fear them. A male and female worker of mine was murdered. In accordance

with the decision of the Executive Council and my own decision (influenced by a person close to him at the moment) I had to leave the Gam Udawa stage. I explained the entire episode to Mr Jayawardena of the National Housing Authority. More than any other thing, protecting the lives of Sarvodaya workers from both sides was my priority and my responsibility. Thereafter even, I gave whatever assistance requested, apart from getting on to the stage of Gam Udawa. There is evidence to this effect. This is no reason to be cross with me. My belief was that he understood my situation.

During the nomination period, I acceded to the requests made by him, within my limitations. When a person possessing supernatural power to some extent (inflating it) gave a warning of disaster to him and Mrs Premadasa, I immediately met Him and Mrs Premadasa to inform about the matter thereby doing my duty by them. As much as I believed it they too believed. In fact, Mrs Premadasa, in front of the Prime Minister stated that this was a help that would be remembered during their lifetime. Later on, I removed from my association this man who claimed to hold supernatural power as he was partly fraudulent.

As the leader of the Sarvodaya Movement it was my duty to protect the lives of all Sarvodaya workers. At a time when the powerful people of the country too were getting killed through terrorism, what more, but the righteous and virtuous lifestyles and neutrality would be the safest way for the unarmed like us? I advised them so. This is easily understood by politicians. Prior to the election, I explained this to the Prime Minister as well as Mrs Bandaranaike. They accepted it at the time. When I heard anyone of our workers involving in politics too

much I was not hesitant to take immediate action. However, when he became the President I made plans for peace and fulfill a need of the era. It was my honest belief that a leader was born who was capable of working with the people. If there were shortcomings, I would show them indirectly and privately and gradually, with ascending to more positions of power, I believed, an exemplary leader would be born. I was not after political or any other position. I did not even in my dreams expect opposition. I wished him all the best. He accepted.

Cittampi Vinassathi. Acittampi Bhavissathi, true to the Buddha's words,"What one thought not necessarily happen the opposite may happen..." the unexpected happened. Expectations shattered. The person who was with me who did the worst by Sarvodaya became very close to him. A faithful person got fooled. Minds were polluted. This I understood the first day after his victory. As he did not speak with me in the usual friendly manner, I resigned from the Gramodaya Board the same day respecting my self esteem.

As I did not want to see this situation continued, I wrote a number of letters but to no avail. As I was a target of his wrath, what I did not receive during the 40 years of my social service career, I started getting in the form of insults, harassments and publishing of falsehood against me.

Five days after the swearing in of the President, Mr. Shirney Wijesuriya intorragated me, on the instructions of the President. I felt hurt and ashamed. What happened from that time the country and the world know. For one whole year I kept silent. I tried to get the truth explained through people who were close to him. Although they believed in my innocence, they mentioned about his vindictiveness

and washed their hands off the matter. Villany overrode virtue. Step by step, what was built over years got destroyed due to the wrath of the powerful. Many programmes that were planned to be launched for the first time in the world were hampered. It may be that he does not know many of these things. If an opportunity arises, to discuss openly, he himself might be shocked at what had happened. Nothing good came out of these. They brought harm to the President, the country and me.

To maintain silence and be a coward is not my nature. The entire world was watching us, watching us to see what action was forthcoming from us, witnessing the continued devastation of the lofty systems and the paths to achieve them, built over years of dedication. With pain struck hearts we were forced to seek for alternatives. This situation forced us to follow a fresh path by learning lessons from persons of unfailing determination, who have kept faith in people's power, devoid of political power, similar to what we are, but treading the path of righteousness in order to preserve our basic freedom to serve under the supremacy of law, engaging in straight non violent activities, seeking legal redress and creating awareness with patience. This has to be done leaving life at stake. Vinoba Bhave gave the name '*Jeeva Dana*' (gift of life) to this process. Now I am qualified with spiritual purity and courage.

After the appointment of the Presidential Commission to probe into the affairs of the non-governmental sector, I gave up the idea of meeting the President, as it is not ethical while investigations are proceeding. Without going against natural law, room should be left for justice to do its work. I have not committed any crime to seek assistance from the powerful. Therefore, I decided to openly face any

situation. When the Commission concludes its findings, I shall write to the President. On 17th November it was announced that there were no charges against Sarvodaya or me. After 114 police investigations, if there are no charges against us, time is ripe for the President of this country to show his great leadership qualities.

I cannot speak to him on my own. With one telephone call he can change the situation and revert back to cordial relationship that existed in the past. Then there is all round well being, with doubts erased off. Everyone will praise him. I too can start the life I planned from 1987, without delay.

It is very rare that the rest of the world has put persons of my caliber into this type of situations. This is the opinion of erudite people of the world.

Some of them are engaged in research to find out the psychological, social and political factors behind such moves. These will be, some day, added to the world development movement literature. How wonderful it would be if dedication to serve the nation is brought to limelight in the last chapter, instead of the two individual characters? Is there anything in the world more gentlemanlike, "When you cannot agree, disagree agreeably."

I am writing a book titled "Joyous Agony". It is my hope that I am able to conclude the last chapter with the heading "Joyous End." Dayawansa Jayakody can be the distributor.

Dayawansa Malli, we will constantly keep reminding ourselves of the Buddha word, that all sentient things are transient. Then such

problems and conflicts will vanish. I cannot remember when I wrote a letter of this length. I got the free time to do this as I came to India for two days.

The alarming experiences enriched my spirituality. May you too receive the merit accrued. This is a personal letter to you. I thank you again for being so kind towards me.

May the Triple Gem Bless you.
With Best Wishes,
Yours affectionately,
A T Ariyaratne."

After receiving this letter Mr Dayawansa Jayakody had met the President. On that occasion he had been made to listen to a vehement speech I had made in the village Thawalama in Galle and then in a threatening tone he has addressed Mr Jayakody, who then has refrained from mentioning the subject again.

This was my last attempt to make peace with Mr Premadasa; disregarding all harassment and losses he has caused me and Sarvodaya and contemplating only on the good of this efficient social worker; thus failed in this way.

It is not my nature to hate anyone who has done me ill. Even when opposing forces harmed Sarvodaya I took protective action not against the wrong doer but only against the wrong actions. I only had equanimity towards President Premadasa. I looked at the good side of him and not the weaknesses.

01st of May 1993 his life ended most tragically. Around 2 o' clock Janaka brought the news that President Premadasa was assassinated around 12.45pm. He who was blinded with power self centered unable to bare any criticism, he who threw away the true friends and made the corrupted his allies, who failed to uphold his words nor be truthful and he who could not overcome vices even when he was crowned by the people yet he who had various abilities thus ended. But this news did not make me happy nor sad. Only the law of Dharma was reminded and I looked at it with equanimity.

During his 52 month tenure in power he had attempted every means to dishonor me and through Harsha to take over Sarvodaya. He resorted to use every law, methodology possible, he distorted the law and used the CID and the underworld to inflict limitless agony to me. We bore all that with patience, equanimity and compassion not deviating from the path of Dharma. We only used the power of people and the law to protect ourselves. The loss caused to us was the loss caused to the people. Yet all his venom was for destroying me. I fought back through compassion and the legal system. The last time he disgraced me was at Gandhi Ashram Vardha in India. It was directed at me when he referred that some of the Gandhi followers have become very rich. That speech was aired on television and the radio. These acts darkened his spirit further. On no occasion did the people of this country have celebrated rejoicing the death of a leader before, dancing on the streets and lighting fire crackers. On one hand this was a shameless act against our culture on the other hand it is a good lesson for the rest of the future leaders.

The death of Mr Premadasa did not end the threats to this country. My opinion is he was a puppet of a mafia. This mafia still stands

threatening this country. Do any of the future leaders have the strength and wisdom to mitigate this?

I went to my shrine room lighted an oil lamp and transferred merit to the late Mr Premadasa who was kind to me during his days as the Prime Minister, to have a better life of virtue in his next birth.

If Mr Premadasa had not severed ties with me his life and this country would have taken a different turn. Since he became the President I have been able to meet him for a few seconds in Trincomalee only and he never met or spoke to me since then. Yet while he was the Prime Minister he never discarded a single word I have ever advised. He would always telephone me for advice before launching any important activity. His decent language qualities, Gramodaya, Gam Udawa, Jana Hamuwa, Jana Saviya, certain traits of behavior are a few concepts established by discussing with me until the year 1990.

When he became the Prime Minister there was no one who took initiative to write about him to the papers. He either telephoned me or sent someone over to get those work done. I obtained the assistance of many professionals for him. He was an ordinary man who cared for the poor and worked with efficiency. These were the traits that made me like him. I do not know his past nor do I want to know it.

Early morning with Neetha I went to the Presidential House. There were not more than 50 people in the queue. We entered through the main gate and went straight through the entrance to where the coffin was. I contemplated for a few seconds on the transiency of life and transferred merit to him. Amongst the people present it was only Mr Sam Wijesinghe who was known to me. The security people

recognized us. None of the parliamentarians or Mrs Premadasa was present there.

I never deviated from the path of virtue. I see Mr Premadasa as a good man caught up in a mirage. He was destroyed because he trod the path of evil associating with the corrupted and viewed the world with a self centered eye. I was prevented from serving him and the opportunity of serving the country together with him. I fought his misdeeds keeping my life on the line but always with compassion towards him and following the virtuous ways and with courage. The divine powers of Buddha, Gods, the clergy and my mother protected me. We all have good and bad within us. It is the same with Mr Premadasa. Let's find his an exemplary and forget the bad he did.

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Good Samaritan Turned Villain

Before long, after the Peace Corps from India had started missions in the North and East the situation in the country had turned dire. At the beginning of these times, there was trouble for the Sinhalese people, especially, the residents of the Eastern regions. During this time, in 1988, I went to Trincomalee as I had done before. I went on routine evaluations of our organization. I visited both Sinhalese and Tamil villages where I found that the perilous situation has escalated.

As no one from Colombo has participated, I attended the funeral of the Buddhist Monk who was murdered by the Indian Peace Corps. I attended several meetings but did not know that by then my life had also being threatened. That day my life was saved because of Major Mr Saliya Kulatunga who later became the Major General.

Major Mr Saliya Kulatunga

I requested him to write to me in his own words of the incident. Below topic highlights what he had to say.

During the war I have met many soldiers who strived to uphold human rights in one side while courageously executing their duty. Army Commander Denzil Kobbakaduwa was one such special person as well as Major General Saliya A Kulatunge who ranks among the forefront of this group.

Withdraw Karo-Kalthi Karo

The pleasant tranquility of Trincomalee was disturbed by a mockingly derisive minute incident. Our people for generations have lived in peace and harmony with togetherness among different communities. This incident was a result of armed conflicts spurred by induced racial segregations that suddenly arose like an instantaneous volcanic eruption that comes without warning. The Indian Peace Corps came masked as the facilitator of social balance and the mediator for peace but amplified the discord between the communities. This is the best example of how the Good Samaritan became the villain.

On a day during the later part of year 1988, there was some unrest, hushed up talk and rapidity seen amongst the usual duties of the Indian army. There was word that they had dispatched their army all over Trincomalee and suburbs. I was stationed at the Sri Lanka army camp at Fort Fredrick on duty and I was able to discover the reason behind this.

"I uncovered that it was the arrival of the founder of the Sarvodaya Movement, Dr A. T. Ariyaratne. On a visit to Trincomalee had already given a speech to an audience of mixed communities in order to build peace amongst the discarded races.

It was unbearable fact for the Indian Army that within the areas they have taken over power, if some person or an organization made an effort to establish peace. Therefore Dr Ariyaratne was under their direct attention and we understood that it was of utmost importance to remove Dr Ariyaratne out of the area immediately. However, Lieutenant General kalcutt who was the commander in charge of the whole Indian operation had in fact invited Dr Ariyaratne to a dinner that day. It was a laughing matter for us that they chose to convey this message through the renowned General Denzil Kobbakaduwa who was a celebrated expert of warfare. Mr Kobbakaduwa advised me to accompany Dr Ariyaratne for the dinner. A Buddhist Monk who conducted a peace walk for the attention of the Lieutenant General of the Indian army in order to protest for the harassment faced by Sinhalese Buddhist community in the area, was murdered by the Indian Army. Under such circumstances I comprehended the danger that the dinner arrangement could bring.

I picked Dr Ariyaratne around 7.30 in the night and drove towards "Clappenberg" where the Head quarters of Indian Peace Corps was situated. Dr Ariyaratne was seated in the front seat. As we reached the outskirts of the town, suddenly Indian soldiers with automatic rifles turned towards us barred the road in front of us. A search light sweeped, its beam blinding us. Perhaps they recognized Dr Ariyaratne that the search lights were killed. I comprehended that the searching was to ensure Dr Ariyaratne's presence. I heard the guards sending urgent radio messages and then we were allowed to pass on.

I knew I must take extra precautions to protect Dr Ariyaratne on the road towards Clappenberg and thus instructed our escort. We were on

the road near China Bay, suddenly as we turned on a bend, the Indian soldiers came shouting and stopped the convoy for the second instance. They were preparing for some mission where they had already mounted road blocks in a hurry. As instructed our escort dismounted and protectively concealed Dr Ariyaratne. I also got out of the vehicle and spoke to the Indian soldiers first in Hindi then in English followed by Tamil. But I understood that the problem could not be resolved in a diplomatic manner therefore I shouted at them mustering full strength and using strong filthy, abusive language and threatened them that I will be reporting them to General Kalkat. I called out my soldiers to bring out the radio equipment to transmit the situation. I shouted indicating my badges of rank and they sent a second search light through the vehicles but were not able to find Dr Ariyaratne. Thus my strategy succeeded. The ambush melted in to darkness.

The Indian soldiers were called back to withdraw. "Withdraw Karo Kalthi Karo".

Thus, Dr Ariyaratne is alive today to carry on the humane services to the mankind.

This incident brought merry laughter between us every time we met after that and Dr Ariyaratne would remind me repeating "Withdraw Karo Kalthi Karo".

That day Major General Saliya Kulatunga saved my life. I am forever indebted to him.

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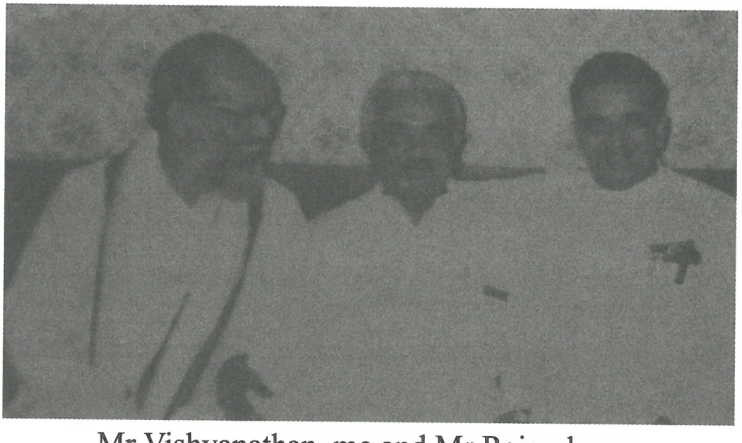
Get this Experience. You will never Regret Mithra Niketan - Founder Shri Vishvanathan

It is important for me to spend time with Mr Rajasekaran and Mr Vishvanathan. I am in the process of recording the life of Mr Vishvanathan. Both of them deserve the May say say Award. I will be nominating them as nominees for the award. Yesterday, that is on the 04th of October in 1988 as we left the airport in Nairobi we faced a humorous incident. In Bombay when returning from African countries it is required for the expatriates to possess a certificate of immunity against yellow fever. If they do not possess this they are kept in quarantine, at their own expense for a week. Raja and I had this certificate while Vishvanathan did not have it.



Mr Vishvanathan, me and Mr Rajasekaran

Mr Bhatiya Panditharatne who was travelling to Lusaka too did not possess this certificate. Mr Vishvanathan spoke with a lady from the health section from the airport and found out that it was possible to

obtain an immunity certificate. I and Raja too were ushered in to a room to have a discussion on this matter. A well dressed gentleman spoke to us, through the health officer that 50 dollars from each could make us eligible to receive the immunity certificate without getting the injection. We spoke for an hour and managed to bring down the bribe for down to 15 dollars each. Four of us got the certificate, Raja and I too obtained it for the fun of it. We were party to corruption. We preferred that to spending one week in Bombay quarantined, at our expense. It was fun. Shri Vishvanathan is four years my senior. He spent a longer part of his life serving the communities in Kerala region. He is ever alive in the hearts of people and his main gift to society is the Mithra Niketan. Let's take a look at its story.

* * *

The place where Mithra Niketan is situated is known as Vellady. Mr Vishvanathan's father who was a Hindu spiritual leader, fought against the Shri Narayana Gurukula clan which was established about 120 years back. Although he belonged to the so called 'low caste', he did not bow down in front of the threats of perceived 'high classes'. He started the "Shri Narayana Dharma Administration Yoga Movement" in aid of the low caste women. The experience he had of living and working amongst high and low caste communities and various religious sects gave him the strength and courage for social service.

The Grandfather of Vishvanathan was a renowned Ayurvedic doctor. He discarding religion caste or creed and considering the brotherhood of all people constructed places of worship for all. He built a Shiva Kovil introducing as 'this is your Shiva'. The Shiva Kovils of the high caste were for them only, in their minds Shiva was there's only.

The young Vishvanathan joined the Freedom Struggle of Mahathma Gandhi during 1943 to 1945 where he found the friendship of Gandhi follower Shri Ramachandran. There he managed to give impetus to a political Movement by the young to reopen the tea shops that were closed and to stand up against the colonialism and caste segregation. He encouraged cotton plantations by distributing collected cotton seeds and inaugurated the weaving of cloth using cotton. He also fought to establish universal suffrage and compulsory education. He even visited homes to encourage parents to send children to schools and sometimes forcefully admitted to schools the children who evaded education.

Vishvanathan's father was a contractor and he assisted the son in many ways. He proposed that the then prevalent basic education system be changed, and thus he took under his control the power retained by the privileged class. Vishvanathan familiarized himself with Sewagram of Mahathma Gandhi and Shanthi Nikethan of Rabindranath Tagore and became a philosopher at a very young age. His life was influenced by these great philosophies and he continued to live in a thatched house. Vishvanathan was influenced by J C Kumarappa's economical teachings which were in accordance with Mahathma Gandhi's philosophy and also he was influenced by Shri Jayaprakash Narayan who built a great political philosophy. He received the Quaker scholarship in 1953 and went to Pennsylvania in America for higher education. He met with students of many nationalities and learnt a great deal. He studied in depth on Corporative movements, credit societies, land grant collegiate and adult education institutes and was fortunate to meet the renowned philosopher and educationist Anner Morgan. On his return to India Mr P Ramachandran provided him

accommodation at Shanthi Niketan and he continued his association with Ashadevi, Ariyanayagam and J C Kumarappa. Later he visited Sewagram and brought its concepts to Shanthi Nikethan where through his social service he populated these concepts amongst the communities and he established a new centre named Shri Nikatan for cooperative development of the villages. His personal vision, 'Vishva Bharathi' did not get mixed up with any other concepts during his lifetime.

During vacation time of Shanthi Nikethan he travelled extensively. He never was keen on gaining higher degrees or to join the government services. Mr Anil Chandra who was the Minister of education at that time provided him with the resources necessary for his explorations, as a result he had the opportunity of meeting the famed philosopher and educationist Arthur Morgan. Mr Vishvanathan had the opportunity of joining important discussions with Mr Morgan. Around the age of 90 Mr Morgan came to spend his time at Mithra Niketan with Mr Vishvanathan. Vishvanathan worked tirelessly and with the money he earned he went to Beria College and to Folk high school to enhance his knowledge.

He spent around one and half years in America where he met Martin Luther King, visited Arthur Morgans training Institute and college, visited the Antioch Laboratory and met communities in the Appelechian mountain regions and united them. He toured these areas again and started industries. The maturity he gained with the vast experiences in this field made him contemplate on contributing something scientifically.

Later on he met with great scientists such as Julian Huskly and reached Denmark travelling through England and learnt on high school cultures, art and cooperative life of Europe and Scandinavia. Then 1956 he travelled back to his village and started programmes through Mithra Niketan with the villages.

'What I require is not degrees but experiences. I must work with people' was one of his sayings. The only obstacle to fulfill his vision was the lack of resources. Since he had no land and buildings for social services activities he had to rent the village church. He walked about 50 miles per day but he did not join with Vinoba Bhave. He did not leave the village even amidst any hardships nor did he accept the position offered as "Bharath Worker Services Secretary". He had death threats several times since he worked against caste systems and the injustice inflicted upon the poor by the rich. Before his visits to Mithra Niketan, he started organizing the Harijan (low caste) communities. The high caste families got enraged by these acts and plotted to get him killed by the ruffian Gunda and tried to get him murdered by arranging a bus accident. At Vellanadi junction with the attack of an enemy he lost the hearing in one ear. After this incident he had left to Shanthi Nikethan, saying he would not return. One day the man who attacked him met him and had pleaded crying for forgiveness.

* * *

On his return home from foreign travels he would receive welcome from the people. I started my work with the hope of working according to my heart's content. People thought that I will become a powerful man after leaving the village. My desire was to remain in the village serving the people. Mr Vishvanathan with the help of his father

arranged accommodation facilities at the only primary school in the village. Children with the abundant love of the teachers started to linger in the school even out of school hours. The children were educated on details of the Shanthi Nikethan and about the foreign lands which amplified their interest in learning and association with the teachers.

"The children seeing me weaving wanted to learn the art which in turn aided me to give birth to a community that used the art of spinning. These skills helped to enhance education and paved way to teach them qualities such as leadership. The progress was such that the children experimented on these skills and new creations were introduced for the knowledge of the teachers as well. If one refrains from mental and physical harassment to children, in place of fear if love and kindness was shown a healthy teacher student relationship based on trust is bound to be established and then anything becomes possible. Such relationships and progress induced teachers to take such an interest in the children that they even paid visits to children during weekends. Meanwhile Mr Vishvanathans father bought a new house for the use of the school and the reverend father who visited to use the library donated the church building for our use.

Those days Gandhi Nidhi service was active and we received Rs 50 per month from this. My parents faced economical hardships during this time and people opted to help us with cash but I refused to accept such, instead requested for material and to participate donating their labour. This inculcated a notion of dignity of labour amongst the donators. Since people can work more during the rainy season, we built a road to the village and started on growing crops.

Due to the unfailing determination that he emanated, before long, even his enemies started to respect him. He established education institutes that provided a complete education from the pre schooler up to the adult learner. The development processes that were built ensured the safety and preservation of the nature, flora and fauna, water ways and the old technological systems. He was a pioneer of non party fivefold political system. He further started a culture of savings, credit schemes and cooperative banks. Due to Mithra Nikethan now this area has earned the status of a model developed sustainable economy.

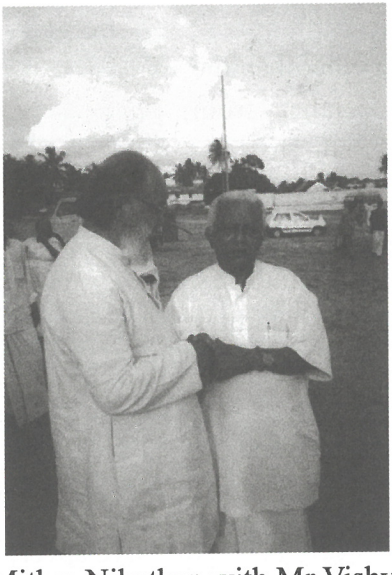
What happened thereafter? The Rev. Father, who was scared seeing the progress we have achieved, wanted the church back. Immediately Mr Vishvanathan returned the church building and carried on his activities in an acre of land received from his father.

at The Mithra Nikethan with Mr Vishvanathan

I have visited Mithra Nikethan many times. Mr Vishvanathan too has visited Sarvodaya many times. Besides we have met each other in many foreign lands been able to strengthen our friendship. Shri

Vishvanathan considers me as a close friend. If you can meet this great man and be able to visit Mithra Nikethan in Kerala, I believe it would be a splendid experience that you will never regret.

Meeting Prof. G. Ramachandran



at The Mithra Nikethan with Mr Vishvanathan

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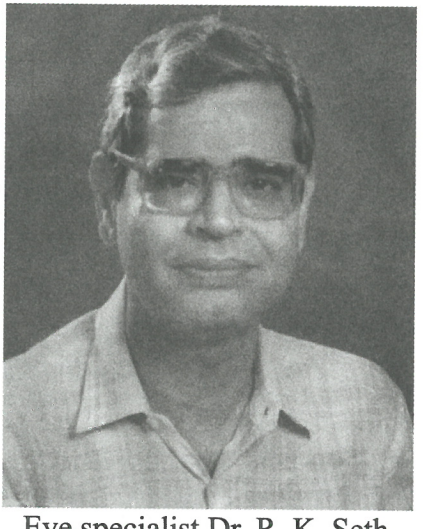
A Heart Full of Compassion
Dr R K Seth

I went to New Delhi to deliver a lecture and when I reached the hall there was another gentleman delivering his speech. Listening to this speech I was moved and overwhelmed with warmth and affection for this person as if a Sansarik relationship was being rekindled. As he finished his speech I went up to him and spoke. As if a long ago friend he embraced me and appeared very pleased to meet me. For a conversation we went to his eye clinic Venu.

As we entered Venu a soothing music of the Baghavath Geetha emanated from within. It was obvious that this professional was on a path of spiritual development.

This person was no other than the renowned eye specialist from North India, Dr R K Seth. He is the founder of the Venu eye clinic and research center. He was one of the leading specialists in the industry amongst community eye institutes and had built his clinic with state of the art facilities. He loved the poor and the helpless and with his great professional skill helped thousands of people and dedicated his life to serve humanity.



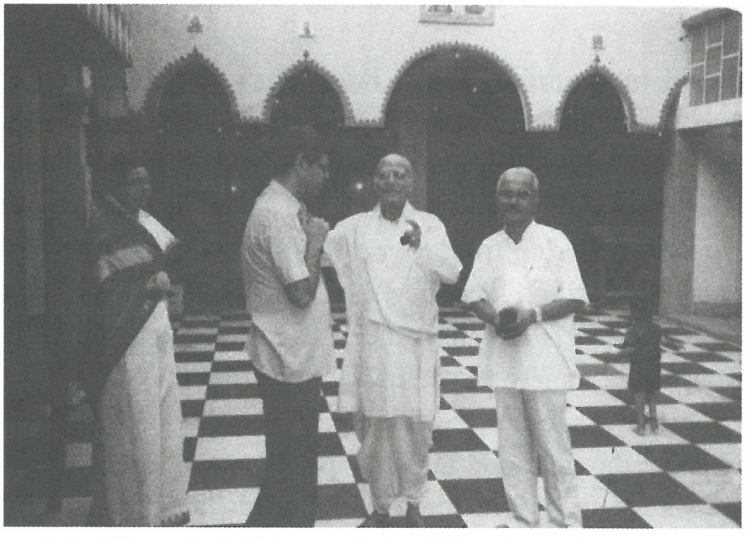
Eye specialist Dr. R. K. Seth

Dr Seth received his medical degree from Amritsar medical school in Panjab and obtained his post graduate in 1966 from Moulana Azad in New Delhi.

He served in hospitals Thirat Ram, Pesa Ram, St Stephen and conducted eye clinics in many urban areas. His first life changing experience happened when he was in the height of his medical career. He had symptoms to suspect that life had not many years reserved for him. He was suffering from Myocardial infarct which was an acute heart condition which he suffered in May and again for the second time October in 1976. By that time he had achieved fame, respect and wealth from the society which made him realize that it was his turn to repay something back to the society. The best way for this, he realized was to serve the poor and helpless using his professional skills. Mr Seth gathered a team from amongst fellow doctors, businessmen and some professionals and founded the Venu Charitable Society in 1980. Venu became a Charitable Organisation. A new institution was established in New Delhi for eye protection treatment with the help of specially qualified professionals. As it was inconvenient for poor people from the villages and slum areas to travel to New Delhi, his clinic services were expanded and alternative methods were introduced for the poor to benefit from the services. Whenever I visited him he would examine my eyes and if treatment was needed he immediately attended to it.

By 1996 it was possible to expand the services to encompass 20 districts which were centered based on a base hospital in New Delhi and a foundation stone was laid to build a house in Sheikh Area exclusively for this purpose. On 29th of January the same year Dr Seth

bade his final farewell to us. He was only 56. According to his wishes his followers continue the services he began.



Ms. Thanuja Joshi, Dr. Seth with Mr. Guru Maharaj

Me, Thanuja Joshi and Neetha

Ms Thanuja Joshi acts as the Hon. Secretary of the Venu Charitable Organization. She is the President of the Indian Eye Bank Society. Dr S C Gupta is the Medical Director of the Venu Charitable Organisation.

Such symbols of human kindness are very rare. There service will always be alive in the hearts of people. It has been 10 years since my dear brother Dr R K Seth has left us. But still everytime I visit New Delhi I make sure to pay a visit to Venu Eye Institute and meet Thanuja nangi and Dr Guptha. Today the new building is completed and continues to provide a high quality service to the people.

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Mr. Sato Kichiro
Silver Volunteers

Mr Sato Kichiro who was a member of the Japans Silver Volunteers Organization is an old friend who visited the Sarvodaya Headquarters frequently. He was born on 13 of April in 1915 in Japan and was a Buddhist. Mr Kichiro has been an auditor since the beginning for Silver Volunteers which is a charity organization that provides numerous aid and voluntary services. This organization was founded in February 1981 in Chiyodaku Tokyo. There are more than 1000 members in the organization who volunteer to serve in developing countries. According to Mr Kichiro five members had visited Colombo and Kelaniya universities recently to teach Japanese language voluntarily. He too as a habit visited Sri Lanka at least once a year and provided many services voluntarily.

While on visit to Sarvodaya he would get bonded with the handicapped children and the staff at Suwasetha. He was pleasured in spending time with the children and the elders in the orphanages. He still remembers with much pleasure of how he danced and sang together with the grandmothers in the Rathmalana elder's Home.

Mr Sato was one who appreciated and wished from the bottom of his heart to receive my love and kindness when he came to visit us. He strongly believed that he was able to perform his duties well due to the blessings, support, kindness and encouragement he received from me. Gratitude is a trait in him. As soon as he returned to Japan he would always write back to me. He always wrote "I came back and

commenced the voluntary services". He worked at the Silver Volunteers Tokyo and Kanda Sudavio offices. Every letter would contain "I arrived at the airport safely. I thank you very much for treating me with love and care during my stay in Sri Lanka". His letters are brief but full of pleasure and gratitude. Even when he planned to come to Sri Lanka he would write a letter with the line, "I will arrive on Sri Lanka on such and such day, you would help me the same way as always won't you? I do expect it". He was humble enough to speak with an open heart always. When he is in the country he lodged at the Ivory Inn restaurant in Barnes Avenue Mount Lavinia.

Last March Sato visited Sri Lanka again. He came looking for me and asked to take a picture of me. He brought a few pictures of his family to show me. His wife son and daughter were in those pictures. His wife had passed away two years ago and since then he had left the post of Auditor and works as a normal volunteer of Silver Volunteers.

Sato was five feet in height, medium built and a simple person. He had a pleasant round smiling face. He spoke English a little and used Japanese fluently. He was a devoted Buddhist and kept a few Bo leaves from the Sri Maha Boddhi inside a book. With much devotion he would reminiscent a statue of Lord Buddha, that he keeps at home.

He would express his joy to others saying, "The houses in Japan are small. So is ours. We are used to small houses. My friend is Mr Ariyaratne. We have been good friends for a very long time."

Now Sato has reached the age of 88, but that doesn't show in him. He is still healthy and strong. Today also I was pleasured to see him arrive. He too is now closer to my friends through the book Bhava Thanha.

Most occasions when I visited Japan I met with him personally and on meetings of Nivano Peace Foundation and with Risso Kosei Kai where he joined these occasions representing the Silver Volunteers.

The last time I saw Satoson was two years ago. He was previously a photographer before joining Silver Volunteers. Now I do not receive any information on him. In the end is our life just another memory only?

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Lions Clubs of Japan

Our relationships with the Japans Lions Clubs are indelible nurtured with feelings of warmth and brotherhood. I believe that it is my duty to dedicate a chapter in this book to elaborate on the belief they hold on us and the numerous help they gave with while making this an opportunity to express our gratitude. These members and activists of the Lions Clubs in Fukuoka Genkai and other such places loved our philosophy and aided us in our community building projects and construction projects. Our relationship started to flourish around the 1990s.

Those times we were suffering from many economical hardships. We very difficultly dragged ourselves forward continuing with our services amidst the harassment of the government and the tightening of administrative laws and regulations for us. At such a time the Lions Clubs came forward as true friends who patiently listened to our grievances and compassionately came for our rescue.

Many of the members from the international clubs Fukuoka Genkai, Fukuoka Sakura, Fukuoka Chikugo and Fukuoka Henkai had connections with Sarvodaya.

Special mention must be made of the services very willingly rendered by Mr Kazumi Miura, President Fukuoka Genkai, Mr Shiro Shigamatsu its secretary and Ms Emi Yoshida.

With the confused state of political affairs in the country that created a thousand issues for our Movement most of our development work was

paralysed. However, due to timely valuable assistance of our Japans Lions Club friends we were able to complete successfully many of the most important constructions. They provided us with financial aid whenever it was possible for them to do so. The renovation of the Shanthisena building in the International Peace Center premises, constructing a building for Shanthi sena training activities, the Elders home and the preschool in Ratmalana and Vishva Niketan International Peace Center stand for the credit of Lions Clubs of Japan.

I had to travel to Japan once or twice a year at the invitation of Lions Clubs to deliver lectures and to participate in their annual events such as prize giving. Since we could for sure expect assistance for our development activities from these visits it was not possible to refrain from visits. One occasion I visited Japan is deeply written in my memory because of something special I felt. It was a meeting at Fukuoka Genkai Lions Club. I left from Katunayake airport and reached the Fukuoka airport and took accommodation at the International Hilton Hotel. While I was resting I remembered our people. If it was not for the political powers that prevented me from serving my country by being among our villages, I would not have had to come for these events. Due to the government activities to manipulate harass and destroy us and for the economical hardships the Movement was facing, I participated in these travels to find resources for survival of Sarvodaya work. Many of our projects and necessary building constructions had to be stopped at that time but with the financial aid from Lions Clubs of Japan we were able to complete the projects on time. We finished the preschool and the Elders Home in Ratmalana with the special enthusiasm of Mrs Yoshida who took initiative to aid us through the Fukuoko Genkai Lions Club. Once it was completed Mr Croby came for the ceremonious inauguration of the Home.

To renovate the Shanthisena Peace Brigade building in the International Peace Center premises and bring it to its current condition was possible with the help of Fukuoka Genkai Lions Club. Their affection for us was wondrous. Even when we faced fund shortages from time to time while progressing on renovation of the Shanthisena building they were kind enough to meet those financial needs. These acts should not be forgotten.

The Lions Club friends brought a stack of spectacles and distributed them by conducting eye camps that benefited hundreds. Later together with another 07 clubs they donated us 1200 spectacles and another 10 million Yen. Genkai Lions club celebrated their 10th anniversary on 07th February 1998 at Hotel Nikko where I was donated these by the President of the Club Mr Yoshihiro Norki. I was the Chief Guest at the ceremony. A photograph of me accepting the aid was given prominence in one of their leading news paper 'Mainiche'. Not only the buildings such as Shanthi Sena but also the young people of more than 66000 and thousands of villages were fulfilled with health and medical needs. The rehabilitation activities for the people suffering from war and the community development and continuation were some of the unfailing help received by the lions clubs. Much of the money from the anniversary celebration of Genkai was collected especially for Sarvodaya.

The Shanthi Sena training center was ceremoniously opened on the 08th June 1999. 16 people including Mr Shiro from the Genkai lions club participated for the ceremony. The Buddhist monk Ven. Quang Sin from Thailand who also funded the construction too participated with some more people.

Some of the Lions clubs get together and hold their meetings. When I participated for such a meeting in April 1993 I had no time for even meals or to change my clothes. As soon as I landed at the Fukuoka airport I directly went to this meeting. It was a prize giving of Fukuoka Genkai. From 05 clubs

around 100 members were present for this meeting where I delivered the guest speech. I conveyed the message that there should not be two different worlds in a society as the poor and the affluent but the world should share joy as well as sorrow of each other, where all should together endeavour to build a world devoid of poverty. 20 adorned with the lions cloak were seated in the two front rows. The Sri Lankan and Japanese national flags were fixed in front for which they bowed at before seating themselves. During this occasion also the Genkai members collected funds and donated about one and a half million in yen. I handed over the money to Suwasetha for the construction of the preschool at Sarvodaya headquarters after deducting for my travelling expenses. The festival was telecasted that night.

Next day evening we visited the Narita San monastery in Kurumi city and the tallest statue in Japan. The statue is 62 meters in height and is said to be the goddess Maithree. The cape of the statue holds a Buddha statue and in the hands a child. It is said that beams of light emanate from between the eyebrows of the Buddha statue. It is believed that this place brings happiness to the sorrowful. I had opportunity to visit the tallest tower of Japans coastal area and a Shinto monastery. After the Second World War and the fall of Japan many new religions have originated. Many of the weakened organizations were tread by other religious organizations and the Shinto religion can be mentioned as one that survived.

That day eight people including Nishi San came to the airport to see me off. There hospitality, kindness and generosity shows the progress achieved and the respect earned by the Japanese as a community. They are exemplary. I reminisce the loving warm treatment I received from the former President of Fukuoka Genkai, Mr Kasumi Mura and his family every time I visited Japan. When they come here as my guests I try my best to extend to them the maximum possible hospitality.

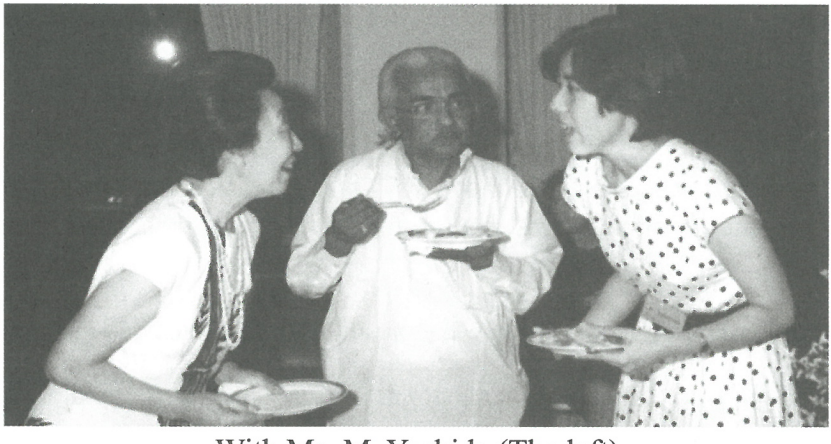
It was possible to establish and sustain a close bond between Sarvodaya and the Lions Clubs of Japan due to the energies strength created by the above events. By the following October when the Genkai members visited Sarvodaya we had completed the building for the preschool.

Welcome agents of Lions Club in front of Sarvodaya headquarters

I should mention Ms Yoshida who like all other friends aided us much.

Ms Yoshida played a major role in obtaining assistance from Fukuoka Genkai Lions Club to build the Elder's Home in Ratmalana. In November 1991 I travelled to Japan and discussed regarding this project. Ms Yoshida immediately made arrangements to aid us through Fukuoka Lions Club and the very next month she paid us a visit with a donation of Rs 449,870 for the Elders Home. Afterwards more Genkai representatives visited us with further donations. Mr Krebi too came for the opening ceremony.

Welcome from Suwasetha preschool children



With Ms. M. Yoshida (The left)

Ms Yoshida had proposed to establish a team to populate Sarvodaya in Japan. It was a great strength that some of the members par took for this project as a team with the leadership of Ms Yoshida. Altogether 12 people including Mr Kusum Mura, Hirano San and Kamisakamoto participated.

We were donated 200,000yen and 100,000 yen by Fukuoka Hewai and Fukuoka Chikugo Lions Clubs from which we constructed two preschools. In 1994 when I returned to Japan I conducted several lectures. We received donations of 100,000yen and 50,000 yen. The common philosophy was building a happy world and social welfare is of utmost importance.

I went to Japan in 1994 with my second daughter Sadeeva. We visited the Hiroshima and Nagasaki and conducted lectures. These days we enjoyed the hospitality of Ms Mura. She gifted Sadeeva with a beautiful bouquet of flower, which was a symbol of her affection and was frequently remembered with appreciation by Sadeeva. During this visit we received donations of USD 5000, USD 100,000 and USD 50,000. The funds were deposited in my name in the Charitable Trust of Vishva Niketan and were utilised to construct the International Peace Center.

In 1996 under the patronage of Fukuoka Genkai a Golf festival was organized together with other Lions Clubs to collect donations for Sarvodaya. These funds were donated for our development activities. Ms Fukusima who was serving in the Sakura Lions Club took an official transfer to Genkai in order to help our activities. I remember her with much gratefulness. She donated 1000 spectacles as well. On 08th of October I went there for a celebration on Mr Shiros invitation and stayed for three days.

Out of the international Lions Clubs the two Chuo Ku and Kitakyusyu of Fukuoka had made friends with me. The Chief of Chuo Ku was the Governer Suburo. A Television programme called Jenjin Manbo was

produced covering the Sarvodaya structure by the 20 members who visited us on the 03rd of February and the group from KBC television. It was telecasted in Japan.

Lighting of lamp at the seminar held in Vishva Samadhi hall

The members of the Lions club who were on a visit to Sarvodaya, attending a lecture at Vishwa Samadhi

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Sekai Kyusei Foundation

General tendency of the humankind is to satisfy material needs and seek happiness and fulfillment chasing behind them which is due to greed. Mojority does not know that spiritual development is as equally important, (perhaps more) as success through material gains which is the reason for less. understanding of the spiritual development, among human beings. Seki Kusei Foundation (Universal Liberation Organization) to save the world was established to help humankind to cultivate awareness of the spiritual component to coincide with the high level of material development mankind has achieved. Mokichi Okada, a Japanese national, born to a poor family is the founder of Sekai Kusei. This Foundation, initiated in Japan was registered as a spiritual service organization in 1947 under the Japanese government. The founder, a compassionate human being, felt the pain and suffering of the poor, the sick and the helpless. He was born in Asakusa district, Hashiba region in 1882, taught the world on how to understand his spiritual vision and achieve success through practice, and left the material world for good in 1955. Before his demise, he gifted to the world a group of his followers, very capable in expoundng the doctrine of their teacher for the benefilt of humankind, in alleviating their suffering.

I came to know of this Foundation during the latter part of 1980. The headquarters, originally established in Atami continues to function from there. It is a 45 minute journey by bullet train from Tokyo to Atami and I have gone there many times at their invitation. Bullet train is very fast, over 300 kilometers per hour and many people travel in

these trains. Traveling by these trains is more expensive than travailing by the normal trains. The first two people I came to know at Seki Kusei Foundation are Jin Hirono San and Mr Watanabe the former president. We built up a very cordial friendship. In Japanese language, 'san' or 'sensei' is used when addressing spiritual leaders. Almost everywhere I went, Hirano San was with me, waiting like a shadow and helping me. Hirano San was born in 1943. He is a Physical Training Teacher; his father who was an army officer died in 1945, two months before the end of the war. His mother is the first woman principal at a ladies primary school. Hirano San is nephew of Mr Watanabe. When I went to Japan in 1990, I paid a vist to Seki Kusei Organization headquarters. Today, it is known as Foundation. According to the belief of the Japanese people Buddha was born on April 23rd. I spent this historically important day at Atami Headquarters. Mr Mokichi Okada's birthday falls on 23rd April. Before I provide the information about the experiences during my visit, it is relevant to explain the activities and systems adopted by the Foundation.

The aims and objectives of this Foundation are to make available human beings a world full of beauty with out any conflicts. This is what human beings have eagerly been waiting for. His prosperous world can be termed as heaven on earth. As found in Buddha's teachings relating to the future state of the world series, the Kethumathi Regime or the Sasana of Maithree Buddha, what Jesus Christ and Alla proclaimed to the world as heaven are all ideal states of existence which human beings are able to reach after total purification.Mr Mokichi Okada introduced to the world that this ideal state is found here and it is the world we live in. His followers named this most noble leader as "Meyushu Sama" meaning most respected spiritual leader.

Bodhisattva Maithree has bestowed on Meyushu Sama the blessings and infinite energies or the devine light for him to help the human race to seek deliverance from suffering. The cardinal purpose of this Foundation is to help human beings to absorb the divine light, be born in the purified state and achieve total deliverance from suffering. Meyushi Sama bestowed on his followers the devine power, strengthened the Foundation with a large number of people joining it and started on a worldwide service in 1835. He is in divine state and the service he began continues. The divine light is bestowed onto a member of the Foundation when he wears the pendant 'Ohikariya'. A Japanese character meaning light is written on a very thin paper and is embedded inside the pendant, the member wearing the Ohikariya reaches Meyushu Sama by way of invisible rays through the pendant and when he, the Foundation member raises his hand, through the palm the person seated opposite him receives divine light. This is 'Jorai' treatment, using infinite energy. 'Hikari' in Japanese meaning light, the common entitlement of everyone, disregards barriers.

On April 23rd when Japanese people celebrate the Vesak, President of Seki Kusei Foundation, Mr Matsumoto put on me a sacred Ohikariya. When a person wears an Ohikariya, the spiritual level raises itself. Ohikariya is gold plated. It is a shining object. I am fortunate enough to be the first person from Sri Lanka to wear an ohikariya. After a ritual I was made to wear the ohkariya at 2pm during a religious offering specially arranged for me. This is an important day in my life, a very special day. Hirano San told me that he had seen bright rays of light reaching me when the ohikariya was put on me. Although it was supposed to have been a rainy day, there was bright sunlight. Sri Lanka Flag was hoisted along with the Japanese Flag.

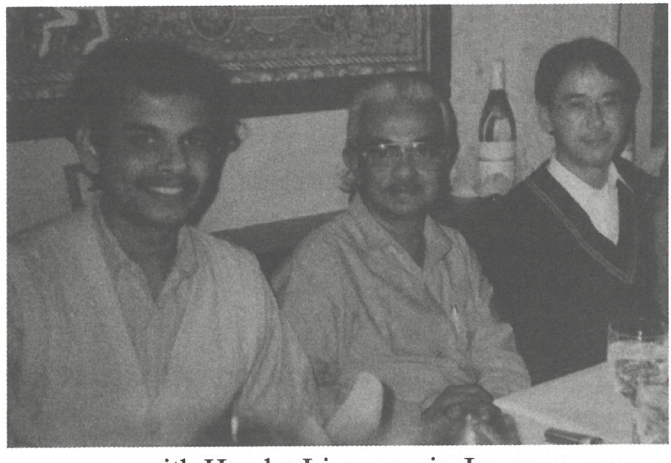
We went to see Fuji or the Fuji mountain the same day. Fuji mountain is well visible from siyoka near Atami. Fuji volcano when it erupted caused great disaster. Now the environment is cool and tourists climb the mountain in their picnics. The mountain area consists of many layers of earth and climbs up to any layer is easy. Normally, this area is covered by clouds, but this particular day there was bright sun and we were able to see the top of the mountain.

The day before I was made to wear Ohkariya, I gave a lecture to the students at the headquarters. Early morning the next day, the 23rd, I got up with a strange experience. Time in Japan was 3am, Sri Lanka time was 12midnight. Jin Hirano San adorns himself with a smile always. The following day of my wearing the Ohikariya, Hirano San walked into my room with a bubbling smile and said, "Ari San, God of Action (Karma Deviyo) is working on your behalf. Hon'ble Mr Matsumoto, the president telephoned me and wanted me to keep you in Japan for another week. On May 1st people from all over Japan visit Atami Head quarters and he is expecting you to give a lecture to the people. He said he is aware that you are a very busy person. Nevertheless, he wishes you to accede to his request." Surprisingly, I decided to handover to Neetha all my assignments during the ensuing week. It may be the work of God of Action as stated by Hirano San. The gains by staying an extra week in Japan were unexpected.

As I had ample time, I went to Tokyo to visit my friend Robert White, President, Arc International. Five years ago, Robert White and Diana, his wife spent eight days with us and they were pleased about Sarvodaya work. Robert gave me a warm welcome, we had lunch together and I delivered a speech to the staff of ARC International.

When I was about to leave Robert gave me an envelope and told me to keep it for my personal expenses. Opening the envelope I found One Million Yen inside. It was a great surprise. I was relieved as I could settle my debts with the money.

During my overseas travel, I am very careful in associating with Sri Lankans. I met Harsha liyanage who was a vise president at Sarvodaya. Harsha came with Tilak who used to visit my home often. I was very pleased to see them. Harsha is the only son of Mr K.C. Liyanage the writer. Harsha has come to Tokyo University to do a post graduate degree in Bio Technology, after completing his degree in Peradeniya University. During the early years of my association with him, I realized that he, an important youth should be given guidance, as i felt he would be a useful citizen.



with Harsha Liyanage in Japan

Hirano San and I took a train to Atami from Tokyo as requested by the president and reched the Seki Kusei Foundation headquarter on May 1st.

There were thousands of people from all walks of life. Till abount 10.45 am President and some other officials waited with us in a room and we were ushered into the place of worship. There were over five thousand people in the main hall. Thousands were accomodated in other halls. They were provided facility.

After the offerings the lectures and other activities began. "Holy God of all light" written on a thick piece of paper in Japanese language was hung above the dais where the offerings were kept. Senseis of the Foundation were attired in white. As the white curtain covering the dais was lifted, the 12 Senseis in a very dignified manner took their seats. Spiritual awe no doubt was there. So was the artistic arrangement. There was music provided by a group of girls who also chanted hymns. (Gaathaa) The practice followed in offerings to Buddha and gods was similar to our practice in Sri Lanka. There were offerings of water, food, fresh fruit, vegetable, sweet meats and they were passed on from person to person and offered at the dais. Natural flowers arranged in Japanese style, in beautiful containers was a pleasing sight. Everyone joined in the chanting of hymns.

President Matsumoto went up to the dais and made his offering. We stood up and joined the others.

At the end of the offerings a young woman came forward and gave a speech on healing. She explained how her mother did not respond to medical treatment but was cured through Jorai.

President Matsumoto bestowed Jorai on the people present and a lady sang in the revered memory of Meyshu Sama. Along with jin Hirano san and Okada san I got on to the stage and jin Hirano made a speech

introducing me to the audience. I spoke for about half hour in English and it was translated into Japanese by Okjatho san. The audience acknowledged my speech with much applause and this event is still fresh in my memory. When I returned to the hall, almost everyone wanted to kiss my hand and also wanted my autograph.

The speech delivered by President Matsumoto was about Sarvoday and me. He stated that when he met me his heart was all aflame and when he retires he will come to Sri Lanka and work with me. In respecting Meyshu Sama's wish, time is ripe now to serve the world. At the conclusion of the celebrations, Sathakibara san accompanied us to the traditional canteen at the headquarters itself where we had our meals.

Next event was a traditional stage play. Eighty two year old Adsumatoku is considered as a national treasure of Japan. His wife acted the main role. The story was woven round the fight between golden dragon and the paid dragon. The golden dragon won and established peace in the world. At the evening party I was instroduced to Mrs Toku and a former Minister of Justice Dr Inaba.

That night Mr. Matsumoto gifted me 300,000 yen. He wanted to learn meditation from me which I willingly taught spending about half hour. The former President of Sekai Kusei is Watanabe Sensei. He was eighty years old then and I had the opportunity of seeing him. I had met him once and was fortunate enough to meet him again. Saxena and Hirano san too were with me. Watanabe Sensei is a very special personage, possessed an ocean of experience and was privileged to be the first student of Meysu Sama the Founder of Seki Kusei. Watanabe Sensei is the grandfather of Okada san. He was old and feeble and was

in a bad state of health when Jorai blessings were bestowed on him. When we met him he was a healthy person. On January 1st, when he was very ill, his picture and the sun had appeared in a photograph taken at Atami temple which is far away from where he lived. It is a miracle and I obtained a copy of the photograph.

Sensei Watanabe told us a part of his life history. He had never gone to school but had written many books on philosophy. When he was a youth he had gone to Tokyo city and had started a vegetable store which he developed. He became a rich man and wore gold watches. He was overjoyed when he mentioned that he followed the advice of his mother which enabled him to achieve spiritual maturity. His view is that money earned should not be hoarded but spent. During that period position of vice president was held by his son Sensei Watanabe.

That year September I visited Arc International, Tokyo, to participate in a function organized by One World One people organization. The vice President of Seki Kusei, Sensei Watanabe came with a group and gifted me Yen one million one hundred and seventy five thousand. I did not expect this gift. They said that this money was in appreciation of the speech I delivered when I visited them in April.

Meyshu Sama was quite fond of ancients arts and there is a beautiful museum he has built. I have visited the museum many times and have noticed the captivating beauty of the place also surfacing the Japanese traditional values. It is well preserved and maintained by the Foundation.

Atami City full of mountains is famous for hot waterwells. Yugachara region has many hot water wells. Hirano san Harsha malli and I bathed

there. Foreign tourists as well as Japanese nationals who visit this place on pleasure trips enjoy bathing from these hot water wells. Hot water bath made me feel fine that night. Keeping to the Japanese tradition I too slid into the hot water tank wearing a small towel.

Meyshu Sama, following his own teachings had created a model in Atami, of the prosperous period, paradise to come, during the Maithree Buddha Sasana. Natural beauty, nature friendly agriculture, top level cleanliness and surrounded by nature's splendour, one would conclude it is a heaven on earth. The other heavens could be seen at Heiyankiyo and Haakone. These heavenly places are declared sacred places and many people from world over visit them on pilgrimages. When Meyshu Sama was living, there were many miracles in the Crystle House at Atami. Even today, devotees experience these miracles. It takes many days to visit the temple museums. I have visited all these museums.

After receiving an Ohikariya, I decided to send two people to Japan, get them to study the vision and the systems prevailing at Seki Kusei and through Sarvodaya to propagate the teachings. I was quite pleased to have a long discussion with president Matsumoto and Mr. Kobayashi on the day I received the Ohikarya. Hirano san thought it was a blessing that President Matsumoto, busy as he was, had about three hours to spend with me. He agreed to the suggestion of two persons from Sarvodaya visiting Seki Kusei to learn Jorai and that he would accept two more to the natural agriculture section.

I gave a detailed description of Sarvodaya and he explained how Jorai energies can be utilized producing food and maintaining good health and that from then onwards Sarvodaya and Seki Kusei would work

together for the common good of mankind. This he said with a broad smile on his face. That night dinner was prepared for us by the students who gathered at the residence of Kamiyama san who was the Finance Director of the Foundation. Mrs. Kamiyama started drawing my picture.

The founder, Seki Kusei, Mokichi Okada had started a newspaper titled Komyo', means divine light. It is a monthly publication, number of copies running into a million. As I did in the past year, I sent a message to the Komyo newspaper this year too, titled My Dreams for the 21st Century. This was done at the request of the Foundation for which I was paid U.S $ 500.

We selected Upul Priyadarshana and Kingsley Kariyawasam for the Seki Kusei training programme. Kingsley is 30 years old and comes from Mithirigala in Gampaha District. Upul who was brought up by Sarvodaya is 27 Years old. In 1991 these two persons were sent to Seki Kusei Foundation Centre in Wuba District.

Kingsley was learning Jorai and Upul natural agriculture. Universal Liberation Organization believes that terminal diseases such as cancer, nervous disorders and many other illnesses are mainly caused by the use of harmful chemicals in the fertilizer used for agriculture and that using Jorai energies, harmless nature friendly technologies can be introduced.

Kingsley Malli learned Japanese language in three months and was successful in jorai programmes as well. Upul stopped his agriculture activity and ran away from the Organization secretly. Kingsley returned to Sri Lanka and conducted Jorai programes through Sarvodaya Peace Brigade. There were many problems and Kingsley

and Jorai bade farewell to Sarvodaya. This is the cause for distancing away of Sarvodaya-Jorai connection. This is one occasion where I brought harm to the organization. *(Sir, I remember Guttila Musila-Prose)*

Originating from Japan, extending to Hawaii in America and to over 80 countries worldwide, Jorai programme is conducted. In Sri Lanka too at 140 centres established by Kingsley, with the headquarters stationed at Ganoaha, the programme continues.

I am happy that Sarvodaya connection with Seki Kusei is reviving since of late. On 11th November 2004, Sarvodaya had a special programme at Tyronne Fernando Stadium, Moratuwa at which Sarvodaya promised to bring up, 10,000 villages in Sri Lanka, to the status of Grama Swarajya. Senei Kobayashi attended this meeting at my invitation and bestowed Jorai energies to over 6,000 regional leaders of Sarvodaya. This was his 4th visit to Sri Lanka. The first one was 12 years back. He was quite pleased to visit me at Sarvodaya headquarters. At the meeting he announced that I was the first from Sri Lanka to wear an Ohikariya. He wished that a 'heaven on earth' place be established in Sri Lanka with 100,000 members. The present President of Seki Kusei is Sensei Netsuo Watanabe.

When I visited Japan in 1991 and later in 1992 to receive the Niwano Peace Award, I went to Seki Kusei headquarters at Atami and met Mr and Mrs Kamiskamoto. They are two wonderful human beings who deserve to be mentioned in this book.

Whenever I visited Japan this couple does not miss to meet me. On several occasions they have come to see me in Sri Lanka. They are in pursuit of finding out how Japan-Sri Lanka connection can be further

developed. Neetha, I and their family members had long discussions regarding this matter.

There were instances where people wanted to poison the minds of the Kamiskamoto couple against me. But Kamisakamotos are my friends who understood me. They dealt with such situations in a subtle manner. "During the time of the Buddha, there was king Bimbisara, but no one spoke of the king. All spoke about the Buddha. After even 1000s of years are gone, Ariyaratne name still would survive."

From Delgahayata Gedara Viplavaya written by Gunadasa Liyanage, It was translated into Japanese by Mr Kamisakamoto.

The mission of Seki Kusei is to propagate Jorai system among human beings, help them towards, purification, liberation and finally nirvana and for persons of other religions to realize their own spiritual goals.

Giving the Jorai Treatment to Neetha and me

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Positive Thoughts for Cooperative Action
Vishva Samadhi Builders

Vishva Samadhi Building

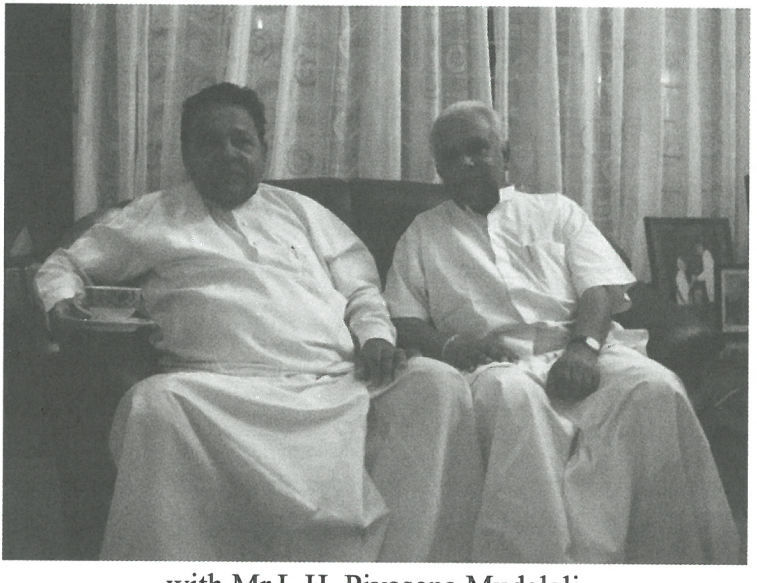
1990 decade was a period Sarvodaya activities expanded nationally and internationally. Facilities at Damsak Mandira were hardly sufficient.

The area behind Damsak Complex was uneven land full of shrub berg and whenever I looked at the place the immediate thought that entered my mind was the suitability of the place for a three storey building. Obtaining the required funds was the problem.

A this time a relative sister of mine visited us along with her husband and children. Her husband, Mr L.H. Piyasena is a well known building contractor. His wife whom we address as Daya nangi used to stay with

us, with punchi akka (elder sister) at Maradana during the school holidays. *Daya Nangi* (Younger sister) is connected to our family through marriage of Sugathadasa *Aiyya* (elder brother) to punchi akka.

Mr Piyasena did a tour of the Sarvodaya complex and wished to know whether there was any help he could render. I accompanied him to the place where the present three storey Vishva Samadhi building is and explained to him that the need of the day was a three storey building, first floor to house the library, the secound floor a hall to accommodate 1,000 persons and the third floor for a conference hall and office space.



with Mr.L.H. Piyasena Mudalali

He wanted to know whether the required money was available. I told him that the money could be found while he continued with the construction work of the building.

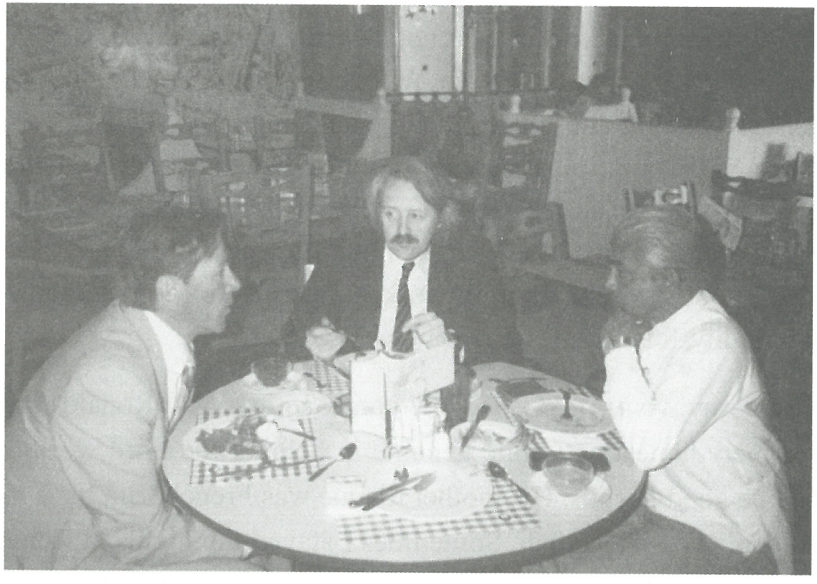
Mr. Priyasena, unlike now, was not loaded with work then. He did the plan and got it approved by me. Within one week, preparatory work, such as clearing the place, putting up temporary shelters for the workmen, storing the necessary building material began and work began adhering to auspicious time. Leaving aside the Financial part, I was joyous to watch a building coming up which could not only be used by our local community workers, but also by the international community, for training the community workers.

During my visits to Canada, I came across Mr. Ronald Leger, extremely honest and quite genuine in helping the third world. We became good friends. His mother tongue was French. But he is quite accomplished in English. Sometimes I stayed the nights at Ronald's residence and had the time to discuss in detail my thoughts about the three storey building complex.

Ronald had many times expressed the wish to visit Sarvodaya and one day I received a telephone call from him that he was at Galle face Hotel, having arrived there a while ago and that he wished to stay with me for a couple of days before going to the Canadian High Commission. We arranged for a few days of tour and early next morning I went to Galle Face Hotel in my jeep.

I was the driver of the jeep and there was another boy to help us.

I kept the map of Sri Lanka on his lap and asked him which direction he wanted to take, and also added that whichever the direction, if he wanted to see a Sarvodaya Village, within 5 minutes I would take him there. He looked at me in surprise.



Mr. Ronald Leger and me

He said, "Well, then we go along the west coast up." After about one hour's drive he suggested that we go to a Sarvodaya village. I stopped the jeep near a shop and asked the shopkeeper whether there was a Sarvodaya village nearby. He gave me the directions to reach the place. Within five minutes we reached the place. This village faced the sea and at the time of our visit, the preschool was in progress ; the preschool teacher was playing with the children. A few mothers were preparing thriposha and mid-day meal for the children. Girls and boys of the youth circle were engaged in *Shramadana* (Voluntary) work. Ronald Leger saw the activities and there was no explanation needed from me. He spent about one hour with the villagers and made a good assessment.

We got inside the jeep and passing Negombo, were heading towards Puttlam. Not even half hour passed when Ronald told me to stop the jeep.

The jeep was stopped right at the centre of the city. as I got off the jeep my eyes met a tall building. At the top floor, to my surprise, was the board, Sarvodaya Legal Aid Services. Both of us went up to the top floor. A few lawyers were having a legal aid clinic. Ron Leger was able to get a good idea of the Sarvodaya activities in Marawila area.

By now, he knew that the visits were not pre-arranged.

From there we went to two poor villages in the puttlam area. He was able to meet villagers from both these villages. During this trip he personally observed the villagers involved in activities connected with the ten basic human needs, which included construction of roadways, wells, toilets, home gardens, wattle and daub houses, trees on either side of the road and the like. At family gatherings he met members of the preschools, children's groups, youth groups, mothers groups and farmers groups. He questioned them and obtained more information.

We spent the night at Anuradhapura Center and on the next day visited villages. He was able to see the volunteers repairing local tanks. I explained to him the history of our ancestors, what they did and what their culture was between 6th century B.C and 12th centering Anuradhapura as the capital. His respect heightened and awe -struck he looked at Maha Bodhi, Ruwanveliseya, Abeyagiriya, Jethavanaya, Mirisawetiya, Thuparamaya, Lovamahapaya and Mihinthalaya. Past Sri Lankan dignity and Sarvodaya, launching its programmes inspired by Anuradhapura vision and culture made Ronald Leger, admire, appreciate and have faith in Sarvodaya. After spending the next day in Kandy and Kegalle districts, I brought him back to Galle Face Hotel.

Next day, he was scheduled to visit Sarvodaya and go to the Canadian High Commission.

After the tour of the headquarters, I introduced Ron to the senior staff of Sarvodaya. He saw the new three storey building construction work and wished to know the sources of funding. I told him that the work so far completed was financed by the contractor Mr Piyasena and that I have promised to repay him. Mr. Ronald Leger wanted me to provide him with a cost estimate of the entire building without delay. I got all the documents prepared and handed them over to Ron before he left to Canada.

After a few days I received an invitation from Mr Ronald Leger for me to deliver a lecture at a training programme for CIDA officials. He was in charge of the non-governmental division of CIDA. In addition to my speech at CIDA, he had arranged for me to speak at other meetings as well. He met the Director, CIDA and other senior officials and gave a full explanation of Sarvodaya activities at local level and how the international community too could be benefited through the propagation of Sarvodaya vision. He did a much better job than what I would have done.

He promised to send a representative from CIDA. Assisted by an architect from Sri Lanka and based on the estimates of these two CIDA would provide credit facilities.

A few days after my return to Sri lanka these people came and according to my recollection gifted Rs eighteen million. This money was gifted through the then High Commissioner for Canada

H.E Mr David Martin Collacot, after signing a gift agreement. I settled Mr Piyasena with this money.

Opening Ceremony

Sarvodaya headquarters in Moratuwa was in urgent need of an International Training Centre for Education and for international conference a hall. We had to put in tremendous effort to find resources. Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) came forward to fulfill this need. The exquisite gift of CIDA, is a blessing conferred on Sarvodaya to complete the international conference hall and the

Mrs Ann Sutherland, Mr Martin Collacott,
High Commissioner and me

auditorium. The auditorium can accommodate 1,000 persons and the conference hall on the top floor is air-conditioned. There are other meeting and conference halls on this floor. This building was shifted to other centres in the country, with the rapid expansion it achieved. The Sarvodaya Central Library which was there, has been shifted to a more spacious area on the ground floor. Vishva Samadhi environment is eye catching. There was more greenery here, than what is found today.

What is meant by Vishwa Samadhi? It means, "Education is essential for peace to dawn and for seeking Justice in human rights field. With the accomplishment of these two, universal awareness is developed" Vishva Samadhi facilitates this process.

The 'house warming ceremony' of the Vishva Samadhi took place on 25th May 1985 under the auspices of His Excellency Mr David Martin Collacott. Mrs. Ann Sadarland Advisor, Development, of the Canadian High Commission, Hon. Mr Tyronne Fernando, M.P. and Deputy Minister Foreign Affairs spoke on the occasion.

The priceless service Sarvodaya renders to the country, from its headquarters at Moratuwa brings us joy and satisfaction. We are pleased to announce that 48 countries are partners in development with Sarvodaya. Mr. Tyronne Fernando mentioned through our efforts world peace and international friendship can be developed.

Speech by Mrs Ann Sadarland

Distinguished guests, I would first of all like to place before you some private and important facts. That is about our high Commissioner. He comes from working in a community development organization,

"Miles for Millions" collecting funds during the period 1969-1970. He too worked in the same organization. Unlike Sarvodaya, this organization was not wide-spread, but working only in 120 villages in Canada. Miles for Millions had tens of thousands of voluntary workers. After two years of work with Miles for Millions my dear friends Ms. Wilf Allen and Ms. Shiela Mc. Person decided to come to Sri Lanka and work for Dr A.T. Ariyaratne's Sarvodaya, which had full public support. They were quite pleased when I took up this appoinment. I believe, when they came here 10 years ago they had the opportunity of a totally worthwhile experience. It brought me great joy to see this beautiful building which has come up with the assistance from CIDA. Dr. A.T. Ariyartne, Mrs Ariyaratne and Sarvodaya receive worldwide accolade, with trust attached. Your hospitality is praiseworthy. I am thankful to you for the opportunity given me to be a participant at this gathering.

Speech by His Excellency Mr Martin Collacott, High Commissioner

Respected Dr. Ariyaratne and Mrs Ariyaratne, Deputy Minister Mr. Tyronne Fernando, distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I thank you for inviting me to the auspicious opening ceremony of the Vishva Samadhi. I consider it an honour and I am pleased about it. This building is not only a beautiful piece of architecture, but also a building complex which will provide training facilities in education for the international community.

The facilities that Vishva Samadhi is able to provide for the international community to study common theories connected to

nature and for various governmental and non-governmental organizations to participate in programmes initiated by Sarvodaya are indeed important and very special.

Professionals and researchers are many, who come to Sarvodaya to study and do research. For years people of various disciplines have been visiting Sarvodaya. This beautifully designed Vishva Samadhi Complex, complete with an international research library, Conference halls, residential facilities, offer opportunities not only to these people but also to people with limited income, to participate in Sarvodaya programmes and acquire for themselves a deep understanding of reality.

The local and foreign representatives who are gathered here today might wonder why CIDA spent this colossal sum of money to help Sarvodaya build Vishva Samadhi. I wish to give a brief explanation. For a number of years a few Canadians had close associations with Sarvodaya and this was extended to non-governmental organizations developing connections.

Sarvodaya earned to itself a reputation of great esteem and popularity within Sri Lanka and outside, from early 1970s. The reason for this is nothing but the training the village communities received from Sarvodaya to mould and develop their personalities and reach contentment through self effort. our Canadians, the NGOs representatives started coming to Sri Lanka.

They were able to be the partners with Sarvodaya, learning from Sarvodaya, enhancing their knowledge and helping Sarvodaya in its efforts to tranform the lives of tens of thousands of villagers and urban dwellers.

It has to be stated here that Sarvodaya's path was not a bed of roses, but a journey full of hardships and needs, its efforts spreading to all four corners of the island.

Although fortified with determination, power and strength which were the pillars that kept the Sarvodaya structure unshaken, as the movement began expanding, problems were there, solvable and unsolvable.

The main reason was the weakening of resources to maintain the Movement. It is true that the main aim of Sarvodaya is to help the communities to unite themselves and work towards the well being of all, they needed capital to work on. The Movement had to provide them this capital. As a Movement Sarvodaya stands out in stem. Their responsibility is tremendous. It has to provide guidance to people and maintain the programmes already launched, there is a line of people waiting till the benefits from Sarvodaya reached them. A considerable amount of money has to be spent for providing the infrastructure facilities for a Movement of such magnitude to survive. I am aware that Sarvodaya experienced financial crisis in the recent past. One of the main reasons for this situation is the critical world economic situation that the donor agencies themselves had to face, restricting the help they made available to Sarvodaya.

Even amidst such a background, CIDA agreed to help Sarvodaya. But we had to be sure in our own minds whether Sarvodaya could march forward successfully. Similar to other governments and organizations, we have to think afar and make our decisions. Therefore, we requested Sarvodaya to submit to us a full report containing all activities of Sarvoday, its programmes, organizational structure, utilization of

finances, investments and other important areas of activity. There is another matter worth mentioning. In addition to CIDA, NORAD, a Norwegaian organization has shown interest in the Sanitation and Health facilities and other sections of Sarvoday. Hoping to be of assistance, NORAD too had obatained a report from Sarvodaya.

In 1984 a highly qualified professional team visited Sri Lanka and spent sometime. Their aim was not restricted to scrutinzing the organizational structure at Sarvodaya Headquarters, but to visit the villages and find out from the villagers to what extent Sarvodaya has influenced their lives towards un upward trend. The CIDA team probed into every possible detail, mothers' groups, farmers' group, children's groups, youth groups, elders' groups and the volunteer camps conducted under Sarvodaya Leadership Effort.

They inspected the projects maintained by the Sarvodaya loans and understood the valuable services rendered to the community by Sarvodaya. CIDA representatives were able to observe the iron works, weaving centres, garment sewing centres, engineering works, batik section, the new printing press, all these falling into the income generating process. They were able to assess the areas that Sarvodaya needed assistance.

I do not intend to place before you the entire report of this survey team, but I am mentioning here the salient points.

The Survey team having visited every nook and corner of Sri Lanka had expressed their wonder and praise about the vast arena of Sarvodaya activities. The advisory team was quite pleased about the village communities, over six thousand, through voluntary work

having their common needs such as constructing village roadways, repairing tanks, cleaning waterways, fulfilled, while being engaged in these activities, they realized the importance of and the vast benefits the voluntary effort brought into their lives. The education they received was appropriate, the survey team was able to see activities of preschool children, nutrition projects thrift and savings schemes and legal aid services, in about three thousand villages.

The most significant feature the survey team witnessed was the enthusiasm and the determination evinced by the villagers of the most difficult parts of Sri Lanka. Their collective positive thoughts towards united effort and their self-confidence, I believe were the qualities implanted in them by Sarvodaya.

It was crystal clear for the Canadian Advisory Team that the success of Sarvodaya was due to the guiding force, all round impeccability, honest leadership that is A.T. Ariyartne. the proper direction given by him is the result of Sarvodaya's progress. I am stating these as extracts from the report itself.

The faithful and dedicated Sarvodaya management, their hard work, attention paid by workers at all levels to perform their duties are of the highest standard.

No statistics are needed to prove the successes of the loan scheme for the benefit of the village communities, for, they are clearly visible. There is a wide gap between Sarvodaya loan scheme and government loan schemes. Government loans to villagers are most unsuccessful, only about 10% reaching the sucess level. It is a challenging situation without hope. The rate of repayment of Sarvodaya loans to villagers is

about 89%. The reason for success are the proper guidance, advice and the encouragement they receive from Sarvodaya. The survey Team had fully understood that programmes were properly managed as the usual doctrine of Sarvodaya, self-help, self-confidence, leading to well being of all was applied.

Another important decision that the advisors had arrived at is the financially critical situation that Sarvodaya was placed in due to its increasing financial needs. Nevertheless, the success achieved, when compared with the money spent is proportionately higher. Most of what is achieved by Sarvodaya is through voluntary work and the full time workers are paid low salaries. According to the report submitted by the Advisory Team assessing the cost benefit structure Sarvodaya has been able to record the highest benefits with the lowest expenditure.

This advisory report does not confine itself to assess Sarvodaya victories alone, there are recommendations about village development work that need to be changed. All relevant factors are very clearly enumerated in the report. Sarvodaya's enormous capacity and achieving the results desired is unmatchable with any other social service organization in the world.

Please pardon me for bringing in another example. If you examine the annual report of any other organization with that of Sarvodaya, you would find how lethargy and weakness have crept into the former and how far behind it is compared to Sarvodaya. I must emphasize the fact that I have come here today, and CIDA has made this huge contribution, not due to playing up of emotions or feelings due to excitement.

The reason for making available to Sarvodaya such a large amount is the decision made after careful and deep investigations. On behalf of the Candian Government we delved into every aspect and arrived at the clear conclusion that if we Candians wanted to truly give a helping hand to develop Sri Lanka the only way it can be done is through Sarvodaya. The money's worth cannot be realized in any other way.

Organizations helping the government of Sri Lanka are looking for ways and means of helping towards developmental activities. If you scrutinize such a report you would also gather useful information.

When speaking of what Sarvodaya has achieved as a result of its management skills, I have to state the truth, what a human being can see, need not be hidden at all. As you are aware, I am the High Commissioner for Canada in Sri Lanka. I am a government servant of Canada, a civil servant. In my official capacity, I am fully aware of the type of assistance the Canadian Government should give to any country whether modern or otherwise.

For your information, I have to tell you something else. I did not begin my career as a government servant. I worked as a staff member of a Canadian non-governmental organization. There were many similarities between Sarvodaya and the organization I worked for. Due to this experience I have a very clear idea of what Sarvodaya is trying to achieve.

A complete economic analysis would reveal that Sarvodaya renders invaluable service to the rural population of Sri Lanka. It is public knowledge that the Government of Sri Lanka does not possess resources to fulfill such a task. Another cardinal feature of Sarvodaya

(a rate human quality) is its efforts to instill into the hearts and minds of its workers the importance of clearly understanding and acting accordingly to help poorest of the poor, who do not receive any help at all, let alone help, but a little bit of attention even, focused on them by the government.

This is not competition with the Government but a bonus, generous gift bestowed on it. Sarvodaya presents to its beneficiaries unity with them, good will to them and responsibility by them. This is common to any democratic process.

Ladies and gentlemen, Before I conclude my speech I would like to mention briefly what Sarvodaya does for the people. I have spoken in great detail about the community development work of Sarvodaya, developing self-awareness and the qualities of leadership. This country faced a situation filled with uncertainty , owing to conflicts between various communities. You are aware of this fact. I fail in my duty if I do not mention the indefatigable efforts put in by Dr.A.T. Ariyaratne to re-establish unity among the communities.

From the inception of this Movement he helped people belonging to different races, in different regions of the country. During 1983 riots many were the people who suggested variety of solutions, but a very few people were bold enough to come forward and act, among them was Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne who did act, not limiting his advice to words only.

He was capable enough to resort to a definite course of action. A few of us who were there then have forgotten the past. Dr. Ariyaratne organized an island-wide peace walk supported by his own courage

and determination. During the recent past Sarvodaya was seen in the forefront again, providing much needed food and other essntial item to the Jaffna people.

Refugees in Padaviya, Amparai, Batticaloa, Kilinochchi, Vavuniya too received assistance from Sarvodaya. Sarvodaya's presence was clearly noticed as one of the 'first to help' organizations that helped the victims of the dread terrorist attack at the Anuradhapura District.

What Sarvodaya is doing now for the people is beyond comparison; it is a selfless, exquisite Service answering the need of the day. That need is the willingness to serve everybody in equal measure. I sincerely wish that the brotherhood feeling prevalent in Sarvodaya will spread across the island bringing in joy and harmony.

I thank you once again for giving me the honour to be with you on this occassion. Opportunities are there for the entire world to adopt the Sarvodaya cision and its principles and emulate its systems towards a better world.

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Two International Awards: An Appreciation

Honouring the picture of Hon. Gandhi and
Jamnalal Bajaj with flower garlands

Jamnalal Bajaj International award is given by the Jamnalal Bajaj International Foundation in honour of Jamnalal, who was a famous businessman and a noble humanitarian who worked closely with Mahatma Gandhi in serving the society. The award is bestowed in memory of the great service rendered by him to the society and to commemorate his life with much reverence and thankfulness.

Jamnalal Bajaj was a non-violent freedom fighter who was devoted to the principles of Mahatma Gandhi and acted beside him to protect the independence of India being a strong and honest intermediary.

He pioneered the industrialization of India with the production of Bajaj Threewheelers and Scooters. He was a wealthy businessman

who reached the pinnacle of his trade and unselfishly used his wealth for the freedom fight of India.

At first this foundation was established following the concepts and teachings of Mahatma Gandhi, bestowing awards upon a few successful social workers from Bharath (India). However, in 1988 the awards were expanded as 'Jamanlal Bajaj International Awards to appreciate the service of international disciples of Gandhi who propagate his philosophy and principles around the world. I was awarded the inaugural international award in 1990 which was an occasion to commemorate the hundredth birth anniversary of Jamnalal Bajaj.

In a twist of ways I learnt that I was to be awarded the first international award on 17th of November 1990 during the convention in Kuala Lumpur. I left to Malaysia on 15th of November to participate in the conference 'Community Education and Asian Legacy' organized by International Community Education Society as I was invited to deliver the inaugural speech. The incident that occurred in Kuala Lumpur marked an important point in my life.

Professor Ramlal Pareek introducing me to the audience, announcing that I was to be awarded the first International Jamnalal Bajaj and presented me with the letter containing the details in front of the audience. This incident was unexpected as even though I was nominated for the award I had learnt that the Government of India had not approved the award. I suspect that may be because I constantly spoke against India sending Peace Corps to Sri Lanka that they had refused the award. Mr Ramlal Pareek informed that Danilo Dolchi of Cecile, Nelson Mandela of Africa and Fr. Preedy who was continuing

the work of Lansadal Wasto of France were also granted cash awards through the foundation.

The Indian Government had immediately accepted when my name was proposed as the chosen recipient of the award. The selection was done by a committee headed by former Indian Chief Justice and Vice President M. Hidayathulla. It had been a unanimous decision chosen from a list of 40 candidates. I was bestowed this award on the 02nd of November 1990 in Bombay.

I must say that these awards did not give me any special delight as the acceptance of my work by the international community brought solace at a time where my own country leaders were turning a blind eye towards my service.

* * *

On July 08th of the same year in Copenhagen, Switzerland I received the 'August Forel Award' which is the highest award granted by Good Templar Movement for Promoting Temperance. Even though this was a well-honoured award the media controlled by the government did not report this in our media.

Even when Kamal Walebodamalli took the news piece of my reception of Jamnalal Bajaj award to Rupavahini Corporation and Broadcasting Corporation, they have refused to air the news stating they were under orders not to publicize anything with regards to Sarvodaya or Ariyaratne.

I thought to let it be. But the question was, who was this higher power that was preventing these things? Was it the President? The Prime

Minister? Another Political power? Or an Official? I allowed time to solve these questions. In 1990 I returned to Jamnalal Bajaj Foundation on my way to Chandhiga. I was received on behalf of the foundation by Mr Deshai and Mr Herath, the High Commissioner for Sri Lanka. Mr. Upali Mendis and Dr. Hudson Silva were on the same aircraft and accompanied me to lunch at the hotel Sentour. I telephoned Mr. Ramakrishna Bajaj and discussed on the speeches and program for the award ceremony.

I was invited to Chandhiga to deliver the inaugural speech for the closing ceremony of the training course at Commonwealth Training Center.

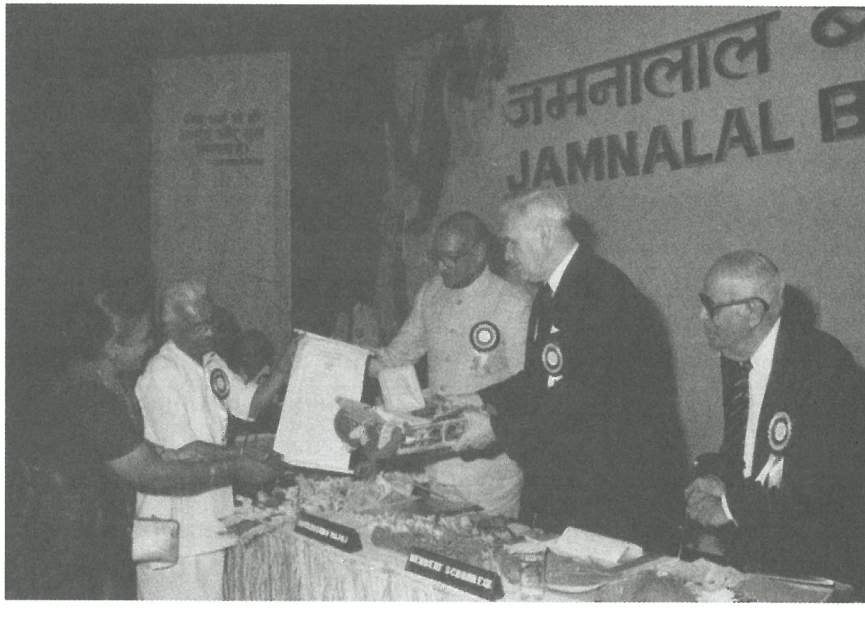
Neetha and I left the country to participate for the Jamnalal Bajaj award ceremony on the 31st of October. We reached Bombay after a two and a half hour flight. We were welcomed by Mr. Paten from Rajbhavan, Mr. Desai from Jamnalal Foundation and by Sri Lanka High Comissioner Mr. Herath. From there we left for Rajbhavan.

On the following day we met Governor Subramanium, Madam Shakunthala (Wife of a former Governor) and had dinner with Mr. Ramakrishna Bajaj. The Chief Guest for the ceremony was Vice President of Austria Dr. Herbert Fambeck. On the following day we, accompanied by Dr. Fambeck and his daughter, Madam Hidayathulla and the members of the Bajaj family visited the caves of Eliphanta.

The Jamnalal Bajaj Award Ceremony was held on the 02nd of October at 5pm. The Nehru auditorium at Bombay received 800 people. The President of the Jamnalal Bajaj Foundation, Mr Hidayathulla who was a famed national leader who was at his fifties at the time, was the host

of the ceremony. The Chief Guest Mr. Fambeck participated with his daughter Ruth while many foreign guests participated as well. It pleased me to see Professor W. M. K. Wijethunga and Mr. Ananda Jayawardena among the crowd.

After the welcome speech the Indian awardees received medals, certificates and cash. Afterwards I was given the award which Neetha was also invited to accept the award with me. Thereafter I made the thanking speech.



Receiving award and Certificate from
Vice President of Germany and Mr. Ramakrishna Bajaj

Afer Presenting the Jamnalal Bajaj Award

Guests and invitees at the ceremony

The ceremony was very colorful and was telecasted on Indian national TV Dhuradharshan. There was a welcome feast. After dinner with the Governor and Madam Subramanium we stayed the night in Rajabhavan where they also accommodated.

'It was announced in the ceremony the Jamnalal Bajaj award was presented to me due to the service I had rendered to uplift human lives in the fields of economics, peace and health basing Ghandian principals and thinking, and for using human values to do so.'

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Sustainable Awakening - Mission for Efficiency

Acceptance Speech of the Jamnalal Bajaj Award

To uplift Gandhian ways and to let the world know the value of Gandhian principles I was made an example by praising me with the Jamnalal Bajaj International Award. I proudly dedicate this to all my supporters who dedicated themselves to establish the Sarvodaya system in Sri Lanka.

With deep humility, and on behalf of my brother and sister committed to build a Sarvodaya Social Order in Sri Lanka. I accept the Jamanlal Bajaj International Award for promoting Gandhian values in the world. This Award has a very special significance to us in Sri Lanka. It comes from India, known to Sri Lankans as "Jambudweepa" or "Bharat" the sacred land hallowed by the footsteps of Lord Gautama Buddha. It comes from the land of Mahavira, Emperor Dharmasoka, Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, Acharya Vinoba Behave, Sri Jayapraksh Narayan and many other leaders of humanity. Their influence on our thinking continues to review and strengthen the affinity between our two countries and people, more so at times when our failings seem to pull us in different directions.

With profound gratitude, therefore, I thank Justice Mr. Hidayathullah, the Chairman of the Board and his council of Advisors for this selection. At the same time, I would like to convey my very sincere thanks to Ramakrishna Bajaj family and Prof. Ramlal Parikh. They were instrumental in inviting me in 1982 to deliver the Kamalnayan Bajaj Lecture Series in Gajarat Vidyapit. Since that time, they have

extended to us all encouragement for our work in Sri Lanka and elsewhere.

In 1959 when Dr. G. Ramachandran, the Founder of the Gandhigram University gave a lecture in Delhi, I heard for the first time, the word "Sarvodaya" - a word coined by Mahatma Gandhi to give expression to the new society he envisaged for India after Independence.

This word "Sarvodaya" instantaneously reminded me of Lord Buddha's expression "sabbe satta Sukhi Honthu" which means "May all beings be Well and Happy". From that day, my vision of a world where Sarvodaya, the Awakening of all, is ensured has inspired me in all my work. Today, in 8,200 villages of Sri Lanka, out of a total of 23,000 villages, village people themselves are trying to bring about a total non-violent transformation in their spiritual, moral, cultural, social, economic and political life with their own efforts. Waves of political and communal violence that engulfed our country from 1983 did not deter these communities - Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim from treading our chosen path of Non-violence and justice.

It is our sincere belief that nothing short of a total transformation in the consciousness of mankind can eradicate hunger, disease, conflict, injustice, war and environmental degradation on our planet. This transformation can be brought about only by a global effort where common and humble men, women and children of the world become the principal agents of such a transformation. This is exactly what we are doing by caring for and sharing with one another in constructive activities. Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka leads a way to peace and Development. By such action, we are creating a critical mass of spiritual consciousness which brings about a humanizing and liberating impact on social, political and economic

institutions that have enslaved us for decades.

We know, for example, that at the planetary level itself, we are destroying our atmosphere, geological and biological support systems in an unprecedented manner. The source of this destruction springs in the human mind which is the breeding ground for greed and fear. It is this greed to satisfy the five senses that transforms itself into blind and sometimes calculated exploitation of fellow beings and pollution of nature, and creates mass poverty for the many and affluence to a few in unbelievable proportions.

Along with this greed for the accumulation of wealth comes fear which necessitates accumulation of power. How often we know of situations where small coteris of people with well organized cohesive instrument of violent structures and weaponry keep vast majorities of people at bay. When power and wealth get accumulated in this manner in the hands of a few and injustices are done on a mass scale, the enlightenment of the human spirit ceases to be a noble objective and ignorance reigns in the minds of human beings.

What is the answer? My observations, experience and insights over a period of nearly 35 years of my work have convinced me that the answer lies in Gandhiji's values of Truth, Non-violence, Satyagraha and Self-denial converted into concrete constructive action. I do not believe that these virtues could be centrally organised on a large scale and across the board. But certainly they can be organised at the individual, family and community levels to reach global proportions. The technology that is needed to network these small communities around the world to have a global impact, is today available in our hands. For individual and collective survival, such an awakening of the people should be encouraged, supported and complemented by

radical devolution of political and economic power from small coteries of human-beings who hold them today to grassroots communities who are languishing in poverty and powerlessness.

Gandhiji's dreams of post-independent India as a Commonwealth of Village Republics can today be extended to the entire South Asian region. We should dream of making the whole of South Asia a Commonwealth of village Republics. If the billion of creating a new society will predominate, but from where a No-proverty No-affluence Society evolves, then the whole humanity will be inspired by actions motivated by such a vision.

The life of Mahatma Gandhi and his kindred spirit Shri Jamanlal Bajaj whose philanthropic, compassionate and sober life we commemorate today with this Award should be an inspiration to all of us, to under take this transformation of man and society.

Let us turn our backs to evils of all barriers that divide us as human-beings in any respect. Let us look towards global harmony and justice by awakening our consciousness. Let us build new social, political and economic institutions where human-beings no longer need to be motivated by Greed and Fear, but are liberated by Beneficence and Love. Let us rekindle the Mahatma's ideal of a Lok a Seva Sangh a and liberate our selves from power-oriented party politics, replacing it with a People's Participatory Democracy.

Let us, as sons and daughters of Bharat and Sri Lanka come closer to each other in this global mission of sustainable awakening for Peace and Justice on our planet.

Thank You.

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Recognize Courage - Strength

August Forrel Award

A proposal that a special Award be given to selected person, was accepted at the international Organization of Good Templers World Conference held in Zurich, Switzeland. It was the idea of the Executive committee to make the Award at the dinner party, but the original discussion about the August Forrel Award was held in Novembet 1985 by the Congress Executive committe. The first Award was given to professor Dr Laldmeer Hugo a Yogoslavian national. The function was held at Zurich.

Dr August Forrel was a human being of rare humane qualties. In addition to being a Specialist in Psychiatry, Dr Forrel acquired many other faculties. He gathered for himself a precious collection of facts through research done relating to alcohol users, the damage that can be caused by alcohol use, and problems connected with alcohol use, all of which were invaluable for the humankind. He was not niggardly as he freely let his country and the world benefit by his knowledge. He taught the world, the value of controlled alcohol use at a moderate level. Once in every four years IOGT World congress and the 'August Forrel Award' give this award to a suitable person selected from a list of nominations. A person qualified in the following areas is eligible to apply for the Award. i.e. such person should put in considerable efforts towards helping people to reduce their intake of alcohol to the maximum possible level.

1. Possess up to date knowledge regarding the harm done to the individual and the entire community through alcohol use by conducting creative research.

2. Disseminate this knowledge among the public.

3. Help fine-tune the legislature relating to use, distribution, trading and manufacture of alcohol.

4. Introduce novel methods to prevent alcohol use, increase the non-alcoholic population in a country to help increase awareness of women, drivers and youth about the harmful effects of alcohol, treading a novel path.

   This information was obtained from the introductory speech made by IOGT President, Mr Avrid J. Johnson, he delivered at the Award ceremony. The balance in his own words:

"There were a number of applicants for this year's Award. All of them have applied through their organizations or their Executive Councils. On past occasions it was possible to honour these people in various ways for their service. but this year only one Award is possible. Therefore, it was necessary for the selection committee to agree unanimously on the Winner. The 1990 Award has to be given to a person who has rendered exquisite services to the Third World population. (Mr Avrid explained the qualities of such person)

"Our man has created history. As was done by Mahatma Gandhi in India, the person we have selected has taken upon himself the question of poverty and the remedy for it too. He explained to the poor people their position and how they should perform their duties individually

on behalf of the community. He made them aware of these. He trained the helpless villagers on how they should function in an active united manner for their common benefit, assuring them of the desired benefits. He helped create hope, will power and education for the communities to organize themselves and march towards progress. The tool he used to render such a valuable service to the country is his own creation, Sri Lanka Sarvodaya Shramadana Sangamaya which he began in 1958. I will very briefly explain to you the type of organization Sarvodaya is.

I request your permission to mention Mr James H. Kregg's name. While Sarvodaya is a flexible movement sufficiently capable of bringing about positive transformations to the entire globe it is also a process by which the third world countries are directed along a development path. Mackey Joana describes it as a humane organization, recognizing equality amongst mankind and aimed at helping people to reach light in life or deliverance. Sarvodaya follows the Buddhist wish 'may all beings be happy'. When compared with Mr Kregg's concept, principles relating to community Welfare activities and the manner in which Buddhism has presented them is remarkable.

Sarvodaya is a social service organization, desirous of helping the individual and the community towards awakening and strenghening themselves, based on Gandhian concept and Buddhist teachings. Sarvodaya began its activities initially, with the determination to encourage the socially and economically underdeveloped, rural communities to develop themselves and ensure that they achieve the desired development. Today this organization is marching forward towards a globally integrated development effort. To differentiate itself from 'Gandhi Sarvodaya Movement', it is named 'Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement'.

As mentioned by me earlier, this Movement was started by a science teacher of a well known Buddhist college in 1958. He got his students to join him at a two week holiday camp in a far off rural village where very poor people lived. They were a service oriented group. Initially, they helped the villagers to identify their needs required for contentment in life and how these needs could be satisfied through the resources such as their own strength and the intelligence they possessed. Finally these poor people were made to understand the realities and work accordingly. The result of these efforts was the community uniting themselves, work for common welfare, probe into their rich ancient traditions and using and developing them to achieve quality living, utilizing their own strength and intelligence. This a learning process for them.

The benefits of this valuable experience were not confined to the villagers, but also it was most beneficial to the students that they started going to rural villages and working very hard. It was the selfless social service becoming wider with time that paved the way to give birth to a national movement.

Today, sarvodaya Movement is present in over 5,000 village and urban communities, serving them very well. The number of Sarvodaya workers is more than 100,000 rendering their services to community in various fields such as local industries, agriculture, health, education and the like.

As much as you are aware of the Sarvodaya Movement as a large organization with a very strong organizational structure, it has gifted to 'IOGT - ADIGS' unmatched service at the highest level. We have successfully launched prevention of alcohol programmes through

Sarvodaya Movement which stretches its unsurpassed services to all four corners of the island.

Although the Government of Sri Lanka in numerous ways has acted to support wider use of alcohol, Sarvodaya fearlessly, defying its action forged ahead and encouraged the masses to refrain from consuming alcohol. Sarvodaya values a society free of alcohol.

This is a wonderfully exemplary man, the founder, the force behind all what Sarvodaya does and the navigator. He is the most respected A.T. Ariyaratne, from Sri Lanka to whom we are awarding the secoud August Forrel Award tonight.

The August Forrel Award was initiated to recognize and bestow honour on all other persons who have contributed the cause of alchol free society and to show our gratitude and appreciation when remembering our honourable member professor Dr August Forrel.

Dr Ariyaratne, it is indeed a privilege and an honour to give this Award to you which we are doing with the greatest joy,

We are most grateful to you for your valuable contribution, your advice which you have readily made available to 'FORUT' and 'LOGT' that made it possible for blossoming of the cooperation Shramadana Movement. Our hearts are filled with praise and it is our expectation that you accept this Award as a symbol of our good will.

We also trust that your matured journey will be enriched and further strength and encouragement gained to carry on with the special work you are engaged in. While wishing your organization all the best we also hope that the existing friendship and cooperation between our two organizations would continue in the future too."

* * *

On 20th June 1990 I left Sri Lanka, reached Tokyo and The Award Ceremony was held on July 8th. This was a two month tour which I began from Japan. Until July 5th I was in Japan and via Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland, America, Holland and Philippines, reached home on September 9. I received the Award at a resplendent Award Ceremony.

Reaching Tokyo Internationa Airport on 20th June, I was met by Mr. Osama Muro and Jin Hirano and Harsha Liyanage Malli who had come to Japan for further studies and later became a Vice President of Sarvodaya. After participating in the Conference on Literacy at Nagoya Conference hall, Japan I delivered the keynote address at Club of Rome, Tokyo on 'I and Child' which received much accolade and in appreciation they promised to send 100,000 Yen.

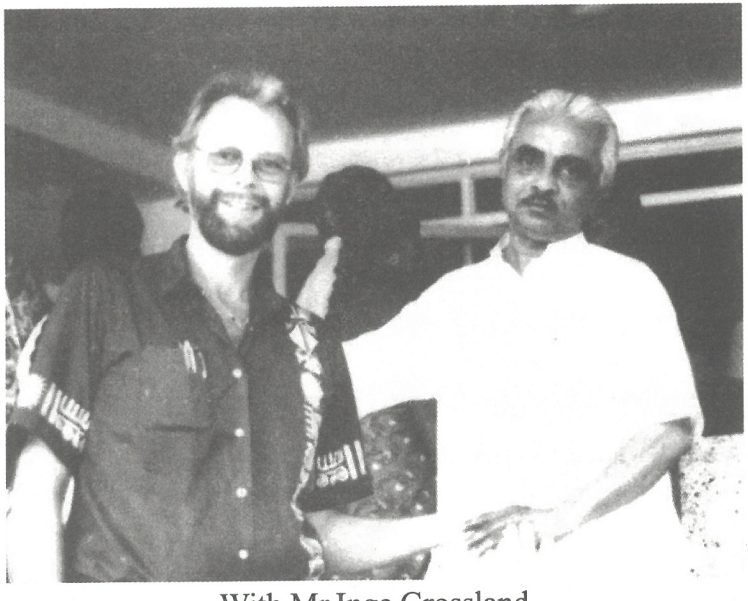
This money was utilized to build the Early Childhood Development Centre. Leaving Atami on July 5th at 9.30pm, from Tokyo International Airport via Antigonish boarded the aircraft to Copenhagan. After passing the dateline, prior to reaching Copenhagan I saw a rainbow which is a sign of good luck. Next day was the August Forrel Celebration dinner party. Dr Diyanath Samarasinghe and Professor Nandadasa Kodagoda travelled with me and were participants at the celebrations.

I wore the usual national dress for the occasion. I received the Award from the President of the National Congress Mr Arvind Jonhson. I limited my speech for five minutes. Next day, the 9th I delivered the speech as recipient of the Award. I kept the original speech prepared by me and gave a speech on what I thought was appropriate, the subject being 'Our Common Future.' From 10th to 13th we had discussions on the work of IOGT and our future plans.

On the last day, along with Fusrule Haq I participated in the 'Our Asia'programme directed by Kamal Waleboda Malli.

Inge Grossland from Scandinavia is a close friend of mine. In 1984 when he was the FORUT representative, he worked with Sarvodaya. Inge too was there at the Award Ceremony and Kamal, Marikkar and Glosstip left in Inge's vehicle.

The 41 year old Inge was a clever person, greatly influenced by his parents in the temparence movement. He is a humble philosopher, conducting all his activities based on the foundation of spirituality. We reached Helsinger, waited in the queue and pushed our vehicle into a boat. After 45 minutes we passed the Denmark border and reached Sweden, waited there for a day and in Inge's Bense left to Norway.



With Mr.Inge Grossland

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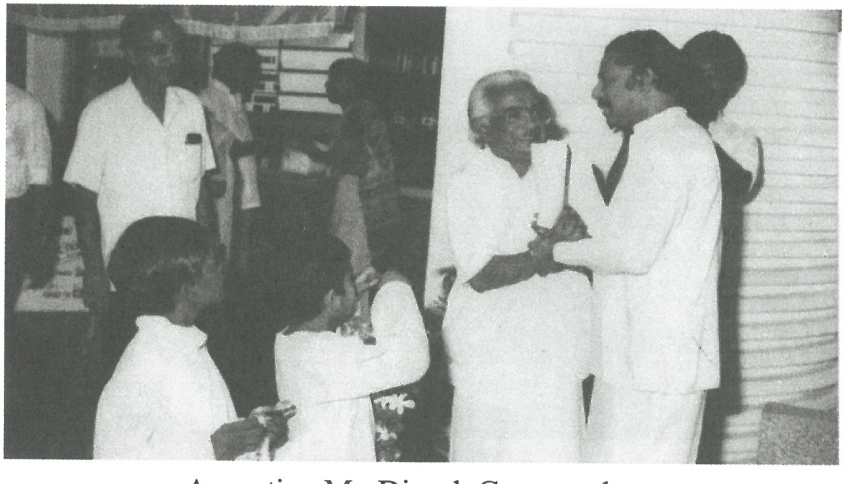
Completing Sixty Years
Only Positivity - No Room for Negativity

Airing my inner feelings, the speech I gave 5th November 1991, when I completed 60 years of life.

"First of all I express my thankful appreciation to all of you who were responsible for organizing this Family Gathering to comemmorate 60 years of earthly existence of this combination of five aggregate called A. T. Ariyaratne, subject to dependent origination in the samsaric journey, Ven. maha sangha, religious dignitaries of other faiths, Member of parliament Hon'ble Mr. Dinesh Gunawardene, who is kind enough to be present here today as the Guest of Honour., His Excellences the ambassadors and all the invitees.



Accepting Mr. Dinesh Gunawardena

Ushering Mr Dinesh Gunewardena to the hall

Going by the life span of my father, which is 90 years and my mother 92 years, it is reasonable for me to expect a life span of 91 years, a full 31 years more, which means that I am fortunate to be blessed by you at least once in every ten years, three occasions of blessing. In reciprocating your well wishes, I wish you good health, joy and long life.

A Spiritual Aim

Many people say that a birthday means one is closer to grave by one more year. That is one way of looking at life. I do not look at life in this manner. One year closer to grave means, one year closer to liberation in the samsaric journey. Only if we have looked at life, with unshakable faith in spirituality, by which liberation or deliverance

from the ever repeating cycle of birth and death. can be achieved, we are able to understand that closer to grave means closer to liberation. I consider it really fortunate for me to have been blessed with education in Buddhist culture and influence of Ven. Buddhist Monks, my parents, teacher, and elders, leading me along the path of spirituality.

All what Sarvodaya professes and does in the form of helping the helpless, helping the poor, efforts put into safeguard and respect individuals, build peace and justice in society and such other thousands of aims are second to this spiritual aim which, if successful, turns the 'man the slave' to man the 'free being'. Any path is no path devoid of spiritual aim. Without the latter, power, wealth, position, acceptance and praise, all components in the cauldron of greed rule the self. The final result, at the end of life's physical journey, though a possessor of kingship, and all the other 'bigness' turn to ashes, leaving a frustrated being.

With the support of my elders, sisters and brothers a social service network was activated and the praise we received nationally and internationally is immense. In equal measure were the insults, derogatory treatment and slander we received from the people who did not like our work. We witnessed the programmes we developed over decades for the benefit of the poor, weakened by obstacles placed by outside forces. What I have not experienced in my lifetime, I faced, the most spiteful acts, especially, during the past two years. As spiritual aim is my cardinal purpose in life, I was able to face with equanimity, the gain-loss, insults-praise honour-disrepute and pain-pleasure.

Speaking to the crowd

Results of Impartiality

People who are guided by spiritual aims have to pay careful attention to all their actions as such action need fit into all-time natural laws. In conformity with natural laws, Sarvodaya tries to transform the individual and the society. This is the reason why we are unable to be guided by a particular class, race, nationality or political party, disregarding the values. From time to time various people in power have placed obstacles causing great damage to our work.

With one stroke of the pen selfish people in power were able to weaken a children's programme we developed over a period of 20 years spending much money, time and effort. It takes only a few minutes for such wicked people to prepare a letter, get it signed and the job is done in putting a strong barrier against a programme Sarvodaya has carefully designed over a period of one decade, to provide relief by way of small scale income generating projects for the benefit of the

poor, helpless people. A telephone call, perhaps of a few minutes duration is sufficient for them to weaken and destroy a printing press which took over 20 years to develop, for providing low cost books for the poor children who are unable to buy their books due to the few rich people monpolizing the printing industry.

Any person, who has not achieved some form of spiritual protection, is likely to abandon social service work when the powerful, without even a touch of spiritual aims, directing their attention on narrow targets, start seriously attacking the former. My Sarvodaya sister and brothers and I were not affected as we knew that these obstacles were friends in disguise that help human beings to cultivate patience, tolerance, courage and determination which are needs for deliverance from suffering in the samsaric journey.

During the past few months there were twenty one death threats. In all these instances I was able to extend loving kindness, dispel fear, practice forgiveness and recognize my inner being.

I ponder over the fact that if we are able to establish spirituality as pivotal point that controls the material side of man, then an oath will be open for us to solve most of the prevailing problems.

True Leaders

Today most of the powerful people go into politics to directly become rich. Political giants of the past utilized their wealth, rather lost their wealth and privileges in the game of politics. These noble people, harassed by the colonial rulers as well as their stooges, were ready to sacrifice their lives for us to live as free people. I am happy that Mr.

Dinesh Gunawardene a son of such a great man, Philip Gunawardene is here today.

I remember Dinesh Malli and his two brothers when they were children going to school during my visits to meet their parents. I can visualize even now how 'Boralugoda Veeraya' stretching himself in an easy in the most relaxed manner, was having dreams about his people. I begin to plant fresh hopes for national awakening when I see the son of this great man, heir, to all the virtues the father possessed, a shining star in gloomy sky of politics of the day.

Encouragement

Philip Gunawardene

A team of Sarvodaya brothers including Dr Jehan Perera and headed by professor Ediriweera Sarattchandra, collected writings from my friends worldover, produced this book and presented this book to me today. It is of great value to me. I have to state that the contents of this book are a forceful wind behind me, pushing me forward to be of service to the world for the next thirty years. Expressing appreciation in this manner encourages the younger generation too to be of service attaching no personal expectation.

Freedom is limited

In the process of dedicating a lifetime of service, there were a number of unexpected happenings taking place. One such happening is restrictions placed on me in the web of organizational structure. As I hold a main position in a legally established organization, my freedom is limited. In order to protect the tens of thousands of Sarvodaya workers, I am unnecessarily burdened. A few people are trying to ease the burden but it appears that the majority is not interested. It may be that these people feel that we are supermen.

Youth Leadership

Today, the last one third of my life began. With the dawn of this period I wish to say something to my Sarvodaya sisters and brothers.

The functioning of Sarvodaya is in your hands.Young and old, working with Sarvodaya, in hundred thousands are expecting an exemplary leadership from you, which you should make available to them without being affected by 'leadership syndrome'. Delve into your inner being and find out for yourself your suitability to receive this honour. It is not sufficient to mechanically conduct your activities. A leader has to bear in mind that essential features entwined in leadership are, mindfulness, clarity of purpose, evaluation of results, correcting the shortcomings, applying rationality. All

these are possible only if one is in the process of spiritual transformation.

Lodging thoughts in your consciousness is a very fast action. The controlling factor, breath by breath meditation should be applied and how far would this be a supportive fact for you to achieve the cardinal aims of Sarvodaya and whether any shifting away of these aims take place should be mindfully contemplated on. If this is not done, the general public will reject your leadership.

People who have taken the law into their hands

A Commission has been appointed to find out activities of non-goverenmental organizations. We cooperated with them by providing in detail all the information required from us. The commission has not called us so far. We have requested at least 60 days for us to give evidence. Before the commission could even conclude its work, some officers, taking the law into their hands, have already started harassing us. Depending on the whims and fancies of the powerful in the state machinery, law can be turned into distorted jargon. This is the reason for folklore, that, law is 'donkey'. But the natural law cannot be distorted. The final verdict is from the natural law. Until then those who are on the path of righteousness should continue, ready for any sacrifice. 'Convert that huge wall of hostility into a source of positive strength'.

Our human rights

We have not gone into power and party politics. Nor, will we do it in future. Nevertheless, when our democratic rights are taken away from

us we are forced to resort to some form of political activity to safeguard our rights. This is not power and party politics. Our entire effort is directed at working for the well being of the community. When we are on this journey and when anti-democratic, unlawful pressure is exerted on us by political factions, we have to create a small space for political play. No one is entitled to blame us, for, ours is development politics and not power and party politics, politics of the people. To protect our human rights, individually and collectively is our prerogative.

Future

I am very grateful to my wife Neetha, who unreservedly supported me, encouraged me and shared my pain and pleasure allowing me the freedom to tread on my chosen path and also my gratitude extends to my children, grandson and granddaughter. I am indebted to my co-workers, national and international who were there with me for 33 years. The numbers are large; it is impossible to mention names.

Personally, in the future, I intend to get closer to spiritual life and give my experiences and ideas. You should endeavour to set me free from sarvodaya development activities.

For the information of this august assembly, let me mention what we have to do by our country and the world.

We are living in a world consisting of people fatigued with poverty, injustice and violence. What we have paid by way of human life, natural resources, peaceful living, material resources, has exceeded millions of human life and trillions of dollars. It is very essential that

we stop this tendency, help communities to protect human life, natural and material resources and re-gain the lost peace, justice and joy for Sri Lanka and the world. 1990 decade is the ideal period for this purpose, Six areas of action enter my mind as necessary ingredients.

1. Divide Sri Lanka into small village and urban community groups, help bring to surface their individual strengths, and establish unity and lead them on a path for them to have their basic needs fulfilled and their human rights protected.

2. Get the leaders of all political parties and other organizations, through Sarvodaya, to join in the struggle for eradication of poverty and protection of human rights in a meaningful manner.

3. 'Replace the present system of Executive Presidency and Westminster parliamentary system with a people's participatory governing structure consisting of village republics that safeguard their human rights and fulfill their basic needs, a political system that suits the people of Sri Lanka and influence the political leaders of today to shift the present system to one that answers all these needs.

4. Ensure that all races preserve their identity, with the hope of stopping our people resorting to violence and racial conflict again, help them tread the path of righteousness, bring an end to the present civil war and provide immediate relief to persons who have been victims of war and other forms of violence, through cooperative effort.

5. Whatever name one may call it, the present economic system is of two extremes, one, depravity of basic human needs and the other,

abundance of luxury. People should be motivated to adopt a truly democratic value based an open economic system providing equal facilities and privileges to public sector, private sector non-government organizations and co-oprative sector representing people.

6. Get media machinery released from the grip of the people in power or any privileged group and convert media into a progressive, non-partisan democratic process.

I earnestly request all those who happen to read these six items to do so with a productive frame of mind.

Urgent attention needed to face a challenge

Before I conclude my speech, I wish to mention about a challenge that Sarvodaya has to face immediately. For the past 33 years Sarvodaya has done its duty by humanity, in no small measure. But during this period, Sarvodaya, and I collectively were deprived of human rights on many occasions. First, we adopted tolerance with patience attitude and then extending loving kindness. From the past two years the extent to which our human rights were taken away created a crisis making it almost impossible for us to deliver our services to the community. Much against our wishes even, we are compelled to resort to other means.

Using government machinery Sarvodaya has been insulted and put to doubt locally and internationally.

Our service delivery system has been disrupted by erroneously interpreting the administrative rules and regulations.

Barriers have been placed to stop us receiving legal foreign donations and new laws have been formulated to weaken us financially.

A very low down act, was degrading the scale of quality, confiscating the printing press we imported which has greatly weekend our financial position and impeded our work. Some government officers have been chosen to use the country's law in a harmful manner against us.

As a means of facing these situations, we have to adopt two ways that organizations and individuals, practising non-violence resort to in order to preserve their human rights.

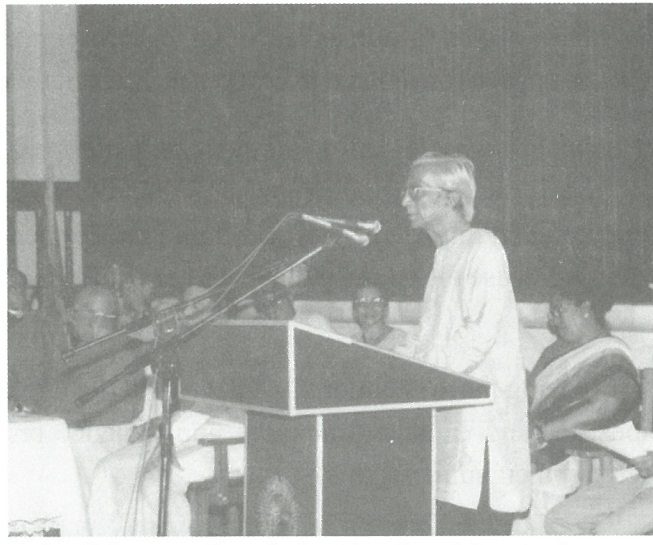
They are, seek justice through courts and direct non-violent action. I shall let you know about these in course of time.

It is possible to resolve all our problems by adopting wholesome means and not evil means. A change in the consciousness is all what is required. One will not come across a better time than the present to do this.

I wish Hon'ble Mr. Dinesh Gunawardene, M.P and all the distinguished guests who are with me at my 60th birthday all the best and thank them most sincerely.

I conclude my speech with the wish that our spiritual journey will bear fruits in bringing our country and the world from darkness to light.

Thank You.



Prof Ediriweera Sarathchandra Speaking at the council

With General Cyril Ranathunga

With Pandit W. D. Amaradewa

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Entitlement is not only for Politicians to Serve The Country

(Dinesh Gunawardene)

Mr. Dinesh Gunawardene, Leader of the people's United Front who was the Chief Guest at the presentation ceremony of Anjali Pranama produced by Professor Ediriweera Saratthchandra on the occasion of the 60th anniversary birthday celebrations of Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne, stated that if not for the humanitarian work Dr. Ariyaratne launched across Sri Lanka, serving all communities as President of Sarvodaya, Sarvodaya would not reach the exalted level, or would have survived as a social service organization, especially amidst threats and barriers placed, for it was Dr. Ariyaratne, the inspired thinker, the humanist who embraced spirituality as the tool for action perform this noble national service.

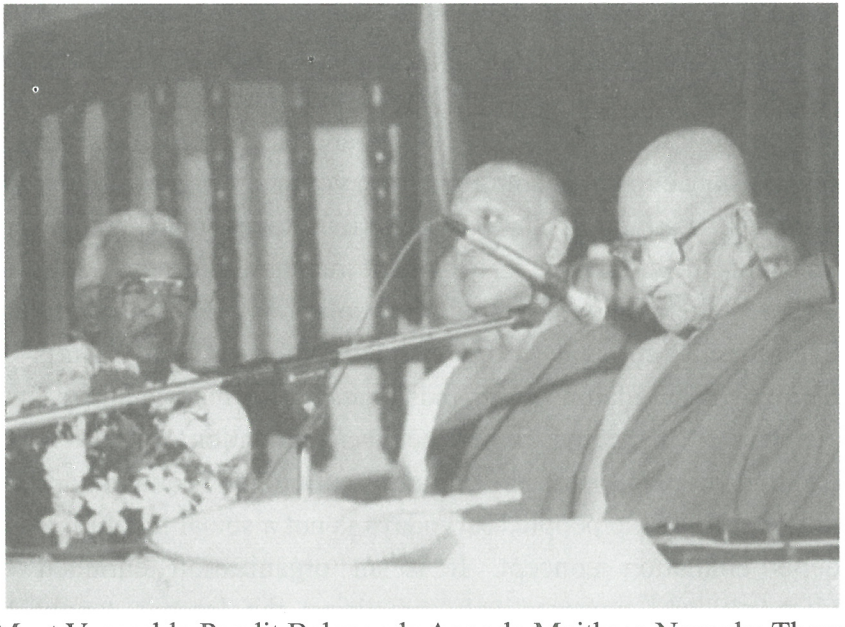
Mr. Dinesh Gunawardene, Leader of the People's United Front speaks - at the council

"The ownership of our country is not restricted to politicians or political parties. Non-governmental organizations are entitled to serve the country and Sarvodaya has accepted this challenge and I am happy about it.

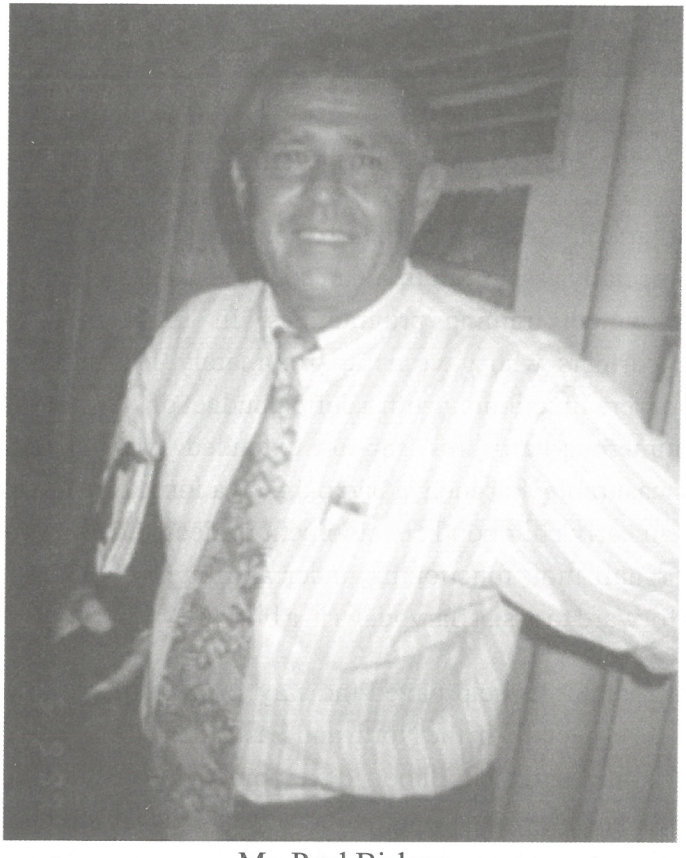
Politicians come to power. They go away from power. They make many promises to come to power. The third world is far more enlightened today than ever before and they cannot be deceived by baseless promises and false ideology. We get a clear picture when we observe the happenings of the other third world countries. Today, we are faced with uncertainty politically, socially and economically. This is dangerous situation where 48% of the annual income of the country is enjoyed by 10% of the affluent class and 40% is distributed among the 85% - 90% population. With this background 60% of the population which is youth lost hope of a future and some took to arms. Departments issuing concept papers and circulars cannot offer solutions to this problem. It is evident and has become necessary to seek assistance towards solutions from voluntary organizations, like Sarvodaya, working in Harmony with traditional concepts to ensure personality development in a humane manner, and not depend on foreign belieft and thoughts for solutions. The predominant development concept today is emulation which results in unemployment, malnutrition, indifference and manslaughter. It is necessary to make the choice between emulation concept and a development plan to suit the country's culture, environment and the daily routine of the people. Sarvodaya is not a social institution that adopts emulation concept. It is an organization enriched by judiciously and constructively practising the lessons taught by Anagarika Dharmapala, personages of the Buddhist Theosophical

Society, erudite persons who led the temperance movements, and it acts placing trust in our own resources, with the idea of not destructing but protecting human life. Thus it can be termed as a social force with a vision of our own. We should seek assistance from such organizations in the future. Acting aloof without proper guidance is inviting worse social calamities. Dr A. T. Ariyaratne is a man of the era. Dedication is one of his principles. He has offered to us an alternate development strategy for the well being of the nation."

The others who delivered speeches were Most Venerable Pandit Balangoda Ananda Maithree Nayaake Thero, Ven. Maduluwawe Sobitha Thero and Mr. Paul Bishof of Sarvodaya Shramadana International.



Most Venerable Pandit Balangoda Ananda Maithree Nayaake Thero speaks - at the council



Mr. Paul Bishop

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Bosom Friends who Helped us and

Mr Robert White

Arc International of Japan, an international resource organization, in Tokyo especially assists South Asian countries in providing resources for development training programmes. In 1991, they were our resource partners who gave us approximately 196million Rupees. When we were functioning with a deficit budget of 71 million Rupees, facing numerous hardships, support extended by Arc International was immeasurable. Sarvodaya had planned a long term development plan for an early childhood development project and One world One people organization functioning under Arc International when they stepped forward to assist Sarvodaya in a big way.

Their magnanimous help paved the way for Sarvodaya to establish islandwide, especially in the North and East, the training programmes, preschools and early childhood development projects which are a great success today. Arc International was a great strength to our organization. Apart from providing financial assistance they gifted us items, conducted workshops and provided us with resource personnel.

Mr. Robert White was the president of Arc International. Robert White, Symbol of honest friendship, with a loving and caring attitude personally for me and for Sarvodaya, is a completely warm hearted friend. In 1992, Mr. Chitthambaram Mahendran, Sri Lanka's Ambassador in Japan started venomous, uncouth attacks on Sarvodaya, Mr White stood his ground and defended Sarvodaya in an impeccable manner. He did not leave room for the ambassador to

continue with his false allegations and insult Sarvodaya. Relentlessly he kept vigil and at the right time bared the truth about Sarvodaya, his honest intepretation, which of course was the truth. Later on, Mr. Mahendran had visited Mr. Robert White and the former was not able to answer a single question of the latter.

The government at that time did much less to harmonize the situation. Instead it encouraged many Mahendrans of ambassador Mahendran type to vlify, and hatefully attack Sarvodaya and me.

In 1986 too, I had to address Sarvodaya workers regarding the difficulties of continuing our programmes due to economic constraints, that they should be guided by Sarvodaya vision and its lofty aims and always keep constant attention on quality and productivity while being thrifty in expenditure, which needed hard work. On receiving this news Robert sent me a congratulatory note, wished me all the best, encouraged me and also wanted to know what he could do. He made arrangements to send a senior resource person through Arc International. Robert was a prince in whatever he did.

At the SanFransisco Universal Movement Conference, in between the explanations he gave about Arc International, he described Sarvodaya activities too. While working at Arc International, the best value for time he spent is the ability he cultivated in interacting with workers as well as beneficiaries in a harmonious, peaceful manner. He categorically stated that this was the salient factor behind the success of his organization and was certain that it would work for Sarvodaya too.

Mr. Robert White

He further stated that his organization would not make donations for personal development programmes outside Asian countries and that his assistance to Sarvodaya would continue. In 1990 at the One World One People Celebrations held in Tokyo, we developed our friendship to a higher level of understanding.

The function was organized by Mr. Robert White, the Chief of Arc International. Besides me, the only other invitee was John Denver, the famous singer. I was fortunate to be with him on the same stage for three and half hours.

Robert's wife Diana and the children they adopted were there at the celebrations. In 1980s this couple had visited Sarvodaya.

John Denver then was a thin, tall unassuming man of 48 years. with much respect he spoke to me, mentioned that he had heard about me and that he was waiting for an opportunity to meet me, and that I was

an example, energizing him. He further stated that he wished to do a fraction even of the service I did. I responded that I was fully aware of the services he rendered through song which embraced children and environment, that I was keen to meet him and was happy about the opportunity.

Chairman of One World One People Mr. Susuki,
Sri Lanka Japan Consul General and me

In stage with musician Mr. John Denver

We had a dialogue, on the subjects of starvation, environmental pollution, war, and child development, directed by the famous television announcer Yama Moto and a famous film actress, with 6,000 audiance listening and watching.

For about half hour, alternatively, Yama moto was questioning and at the end of every answer, John Denver brought my name in. We became friends and I invited him to visit us in Sri Lanka. As a token of appreciation of my participation at the Conference, Robert gifted me 500,000 Yen. Our stay at Hotel Sakura was fully financed by him.

Robert and his wife took genuine interest in prevention of child abuse and rehabilitation of the already abused. The help received from him on behalf of Arc International for Sarvodaya child welfare development work is unforgettable. We had started a similar child welfare project in 1997. I pledged that we will always cooperate with Arc International and as its Head our blessings go to him, the stalwart he is and his supporting staff, in the making of a child, a youth to be, a fitting leader of the future world.

Representing Arc International, Mr Robert White, his wife and their two children visited Sarvodaya many times. On one occasion they stayed for many weeks. Mr white visited a number of our centres and was able to capture the practicality of Sarvodaya vision and learn about the various systems and methodologies it adopts and the subsequent results. When at home with us he was a family member.

Life dynamics was a very active resource partner of Sarvodaya. In an interview arranged for Mr. White with Life Dynamics, through One World One People programme of Arc International Mr. White

effectively explained the Sarvodaya way of life, its vision and a clear analysis of its activities. His interest was kindled by our very successful, wholesome and non-controversial, indisputable lesson for life, beginning the journey with individual awakening and when this happens, what more can be said about global awakening, for, the globe is a confederation of individuals. *(No legislation can change/Control the individual. Enforced discipline will further frustrate him. What Sarvodaya has achieved for the world ensuring peace, harmony and safe life is through self-discipline. As with all things and beings total perfection is not possible. In this spiritual journey each individual, burdened with samsaric baggage has to mend his way towards perfection. Hence, there is hope - Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne, quoted by Rose Perera)* "For persons whose customary lifestyle is affluence, practising individual awakening entails many changes. It is not compulsory that one should belong to an affluent society to work with Sarvodaya. Whatever part in the world we live in Japan, America, Europe, the feelings and concepts of traditional value are gradually slipping away. There is much that could be done for movements like Sarvodaya. There are simple but important features such as humanism, compassion that should be embodied into community life. These are displayed well in Sarvodaya activities and it is left for us to emulate and learn.

When questioned whether he was able to give an example about the efforts of Sarvodaya for global awakening, Mr. Robert White answered thus. "The most appropriate technology that could be applied is lateral communication. International or global awakening would be the result."

"When I am in Sri Lanka, I stay at Ari's home most of the time. His is a simple household. One day, while seated in the kitchen, we discussed lateral communication. Global awakening can come through only when there is friendly interaction between countries which is found very rarely today. This friendship is limited to certain groups only i.e political leaders interact between themselves and exchange ideas. The same goes with business people and other groups. But interaction between regions, villages and families of the globe is hardly seen today.

Sarvodaya successfully continues programmes of this nature. Peace, education, children are vital areas where people should focus their attention and be interested in. These are common to everyone in the world. In order that these needs are fulfilled, Sarvodaya has introduced to achieve the desired result. This is embedded in the Sarvodaya principles and practices. With this form of unity global awakening can be reached.

I am fully convinced and pleased about Sarvodaya concept of the ten basic needs as they cover all what is required by a human being. About five years back I travelled thousands of miles in the third world countries, and the most essential and important factor that I discovered is the noble concept of Sarvodaya 'Let us keep the village clean'

Employing united effort, when villagers clean their villages, their inner-selves automatically get cleansed.

We sponsored a village in Sri Lanka, observed how the villagers shared love, caring and compassion. These are very valuable experiences for us. During the past two years we have learnt much

from Sarvodaya. In conclusion I am pleased to say that I see Sarvodaya as a true example of community development and it is a genuine gift to the world."

Childhood Development Programme

Although we began preschools in Sarvodaya village we continued this service amidst server hardships. We did so as there was no other alternative. The only consoling factor was the dedication of our female workers. While this was strength for us it was also a good omen of future prosperity.

We had prepared plans for preschool development and tried hard to find resources, Our resource partners were able to contribute Rs.196 million. The preschool project alone needed Rs. 71 million. We requested Arc International and Life Dynamics to support us. Arc International was Quite convinced about our village programmes and they promised funds for a special preschool project, Mr. Cosby who came to Sri Lanka as Arc International representative, visited villages and collected information with the help of Mr. D. A. Perera, the General Secretary of Sarvodaya. Finally Arc International decided to fund us. Another factor that helped us develop, yet closer ties with Arc International was the frequent visits of Mr. Cosby to Sarvodaya.

At the invitation of Mr. White in September 1990 I went to Arc International and after a very grand welcome I delivered a lecture to four hundred preschool trainee teachers who had come to Arc International. This was the beginning of the three year funding project by Arc International to Sarvodaya. The four hundred teachers who were graduates were given four thousand preschools.

An exhibition and a musical show too were arranged. Ms. Yoshida of One World One People Organization and Mr. Takara contributed their lot in a big way. I am fortunate to have been a fan and a participant in one of those most modern musical shows and I wondered whether this was a prelude to our Vishhvodaya onward journey.

Next day I visited Mr. Rochi Sasakawa and Mr. Yohani Sasakawa at the Sasakawa Foundation, Mr. Roichi Sasakawa mentioned that he would live up to 200 years and that all that period he would be helping Sarvodaya. Sasakawa are our partners in development. I visited Niwano Peace Foundation and met Mr. Nikiyo Niwano, delivered a lecture at UNESCO and took' th plane to Singapore.

One World One People Organization which is the foreign aid arm of Arc International funded our child Development Programmes. Initially, they sent us Three Million Yen to buid 10 preschools. One World One People Organization collects money in various ways such as conducting sales and approaching philanthropists. We decided to select ten villages from ten districts and build ten preschools. This money was spent on building new preschools and repairing the existing preschools.

As the responsibility of payment to the dedicated, duty conscious preschool teachers should not be placed on the villagers, I suggested to Arc International that preschool teachers would work harder still if this problem could be handled by Arc International. At a meeting of the representatives of Arc International, it was decided that a Fixed Deposit be opened at a bank and the salaries be paid with the interest accrued. A Fixed Deposit of Rs.50,000/- was arranged for each of the preschools. Part of the interest was used for providing kitchen

utensils, playgrounds community halls and facilities for education as well.

The book 'A People's Movement Under Siege" was published during this period. The book was about the injustices to Sarvodaya and our struggle to have our rights protected. The 200 page book was sold in foreign countries at us $ 5 each.

Mr. Susuki, President of the One World One People Organization, came to Sri Lanka with a team of representatives and declared open the preschools in Hatton and Bibile and returned to Japan. Most of the work connected with the preschool project was completed and we are grateful to Arc International for their willingness to help the primary schools in Sarvodaya villages.

During my visit to Tokyo in 1994 December I stepped in at the One World One People Office. It was the birthday of the Japanese Emperor. The Staff of Arc International true to their feelings for Sarvodaya, had organized a sale at their premises and collected 168,000 Yen for building primary schools in Sarvodaya villages. Honesty, love and good will emanating from a pure heart, Robert White and his staff at Arc International, expressed these virtues they possessed, in action by honouring all their promises to Sarvodaya. I am very grateful to them. They had planned to send some of their representatives to Sarvodaya villages.

May 3rd, 4th and 5th are holidays in Japan, the particular week is named 'The Golden Week'. People make use of this period for vacation time. Arc International members too wished to visit Sarvodaya but they had to postpone their visit as I was due to be in India during this period.

I was in India from April 30th to May 6th. One World One People, eager to help Sarvodaya in every possible way, collected two million Yen at a degree awarding celebration. This money was used for our Child Development activities. Mr. Kamisakamoto visited us in December. Even to day, I thank them most gratefully.

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Much Can be Done Collectively, Not Alone

Honourable Nikiyo Niwano

The founder of the high ranking Japanese laic Buddhist organization Riso Kosi Kaai, and Nikiyo Niwano Foundation of Peace, honourable Mr. Nikiyo Niwano is a great philanthropist dedicated to achieving universal peace and inter-religious reconciliation for the past 25 years.

With Hon Nikiyo Niwano

He bravely came forward in every way to salvage humanity from the destructive effects of war, use of nuclear weapons and inter religious disharmony for which he travelled widely across continents, creating a dialogue among the leaders of various international organizations which resulted in the initiation of international religious reconciliation. It was this conception of inter-religious reconciliation

deep rooted in honourable Nikiyo Niwano that paved the way to the establishment of the World Forum of Inter Religious Reconciliation.

A devoted follower of Buddhist Philosophy, Honourable Niwano always adorned the Lotus Sutra of Buddhist teaching. Finding the Lotus Sutra early in life helped him to grasp the guidelines to determine the direction he should lead, which he first spread among his people in the first half of his life, and then devoted the remainder of his time to spreading the message among the international community. World Peace being his only dream, he presented the Lotus Sutra as the means through which World Peace could be achieved. Through the demeanour of Lord Buddha, and the stories of Davadatta, he taught the world the benefits of living without hate and jealousy.

Honourable Niwano who was a strict follower of the teachings of Lotus Sutra, stated: "Problems faced by a section of community is not theirs' alone but common to all" He taught that an individual cannot enjoy the happiness and peace alone by oneself until it is achieved collectively by the whole community. He wrote widely in newspapers and magazines, gave lectures, and wrote books in an effort to spread the core ideas of the Lotus Sutra and Buddhist teaching which everyone can use to achieve success in every aspect of life.

Buddhist Approach for World peace is one of his more famous books. In it, he teaches that motivating people to work collectively for inter religious reconciliation is the best strategy towards achieving long lasting peace. Acting in such a way would allow us to go ahead collectively whilst avoiding weakness and shortcomings. What is necessary is the dedication and faith, he states in the book.

Reiterating the dysfunctional consequences of wasting resources amid the face of natural decay, honourable Niwano educated the community on how to prevent overconsumption and to preserve the remaining resources for future community.

Our planet is like a spaceship with limitations in food production and bearing of resources. With ongoing rate of population growth, we will not be able to enjoy life in the same way in the future. It even seems that some people lose the opportunity of living a long life. We must act wisely and carefully, keeping in mind the young generations to come. We should endeavour to solve our problems using fruitful concepts. If we do not change our spiritual attitudes for the well-being of ourselves and others we will not be able to avoid intolerance and discomfiture.

Japanese people used to believe that over-consumption had no negative impact on the Earth. They ignored my advice which challenged their attitude, and later suffered nature's retribution. Consequently they have now corrected their wrong attitude. Buddhism teaches us all the reasons for the deterioration of life. All living beings with or without conscientiousness bears the nature of Buddha.

" Buddhism is the religion of peace, and I dare say I am a man of peace. Being born in a rural area with natural beauty, and brought up by a warm-hearted, affectionate and peaceful family are the reasons that made me a peaceful, peace-loving person. The other important reason is the Manipathra Sutra which is laden with sublime Buddhist teaching". Hon Niwano venerated this Sutra which was a stanchion for his philanthropic life.

When he first learned the Sutra from his teacher Sukanobu Arai it created a kind of disconcert within him. Then he learned that across the world, irrespective of mind, living and matter is relative, and that there is a sole law governing the protection of mankind. By learning the Manipthra Sutra he could tread the correct path, clear obstacles, and easily take actions to solve the question of peace, he says in the book. It is a profound teaching of Buddhism and peace.

He worked hard to implant his belief that the progressive force of creating a peaceful world is not armed forces but respecting mankind by indulging in religious activities.

With the setbacks Japan suffered after the Second World War, there emerged various religions. To face various hostile forces these new religious organizations collectively formed the Association of Japan's New Religious Organizations. With the unflagging leadership of Hon Niwano it reached its heights. He became its president in 1965.

Honourable Niwano's long term effort was to mend the disunion between religions. He used the verse Inter-religious Reconciliation in order to create companionship not only among the religious sectors but also other communities.

A pioneer of the campaign for banning of nuclear weapons, Hon Akino Niwano formed an association for the same purpose and represented it in many counties, gathering the communities towards peace. Later he led a fifteen-member delegation to Vatican to present a proposal to his holiness the Pope. The core of the proposal was the elimination of excessive nuclear weapons, and blasting them for testing, and restricting their usage for only the benefit of mankind.

Hon Niwano strongly believed that we had a right, by doing such demands, to safeguard human being which His Holiness the Pope approved and commended. Afterwards the delegation presented the same proposal to World Council of Churches, and then France, Great Britain, Germany and America.

Even though Hon Niwano did not meet the leaders of Russia and America, he was able to meet the officials of top hierarchy of those countries and discussed the matter. Response for the concept of the delegation exceeded expectations.

"There is nothing one can do alone, but once initiated collectively there is nothing you cannot do"

This phrase he overhead during his visit created a lasting impact on Hon Niwano, he says in the book.

Cardinal Paul from the Vatican who visited Japan in 1965 invited Hon Niwano to represent Japan as a special guest in the second council of the Vatican. The second council is the highest-regarded body of the Vatican where His Holiness, the Pope and the cardinals make decision on church matters.

This honourable invitation provided Hon Niwano with the rare opportunity of face-to-face discussion with his Holiness the Pope, which Hon Niwano described as an invaluable moment of his life.

"You have the Blessing of God to the fullest extent to continue your admirable mission" said His Holiness the Pope. The momentum which was an emergence of harmony between Christianity and Buddhist philosophy was a golden moment that gave him the greatest

pleasure in his life. Lord Buddha said there was only one truth. I got it cogitated here. And I was determined to hold the World Religion Summit"

World Forum of Religion and Peace:

By now Hon Niwano had created a successful dialogue among the spiritual leaders of the world. He was invited to the 20th Forum held in Boston in 1965 where Riso-Kosi Kai received its membership, helping him to improve international relations.

Since the whole world collectively understood the dangers of the use of nuclear weapons by beginning of 1960, there was a strong need for a spiritual forum, as a result of which the World Forum of Religion and Peace was held by Martin Buber, Pope John and Martin Luther King under the leadership of Hon Niwano.

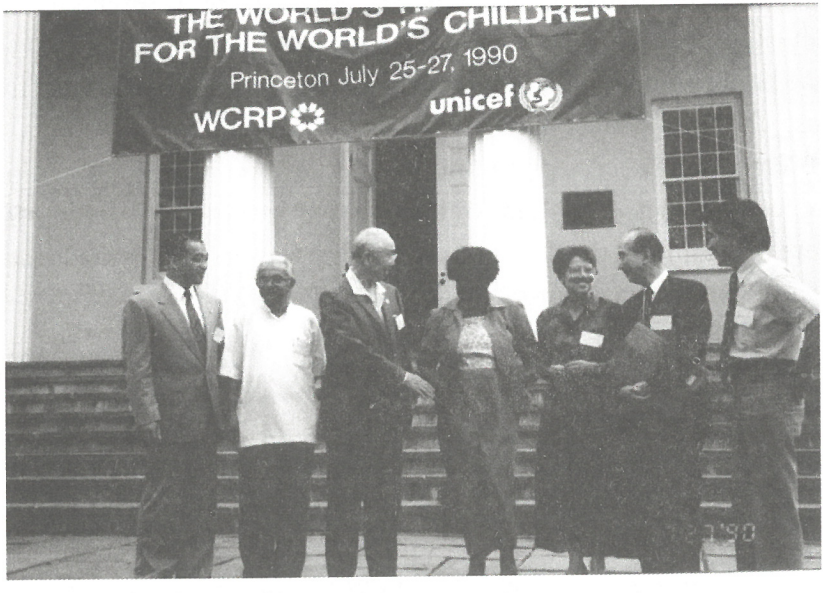
It was held in 1970 at the Tokyo International Conference Centre. Since every relationship is a result of a meeting, Hon Niwano believed that it had a great value in life. In Japan it is believed that the coincidental meeting of two people is a result of relationship in previous life.

Honourable Nikiyo Nowano was the driving force of the world peace process. He held important positions in many spiritual organizations. He travelled widely across Japan to create harmony among many Buddhist sects such as Shinto, Jodo, Shin, Keeta, and Hoso. Working as an international counsellor, he organized a conference in Hawaii aimed at creating a friendship between Japan and America.

Honorable Niwano had an integral affection toward me and Sarvodaya. I believe it was because we both built and enriched our organizations with the same immaculate Buddhist conceptions. I met him several occasions at his organization in Japan.

When I went there to receive the Niwano Peace Award in 1992 I had the opportunity of meeting him at the presentation ceremony, and later at Riso Kosi Ka headquarters.

After the ceremony we went to Kiyoto and visited several temples and gardens. At Century Haiet hotel doctor Uweki gave us a half-and-hour's session of Jorai Treatement. Then we had a discussion with Ven Palpola Vipassi who had come to meet us in the hotel, after which we returned to Riso Kosi Kai heaquarters.



at Riso Kosei Kai headquarters

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The Echo of Peace

Niwano Foundations for Peace

Niwano Peace Foundation for is a social organization in Tokyo Japan. Its mission is to bring peace to the world community, enrichment of diverse cultural values, and motivation of the world community towards the achievement of positive goals. The founder of Japanese non-clergy association Riso Koshi Kai Honarable Mr. Nikiyo Niwano established Niwano Foundation of Peace, bestowing his name to it. He is the president of these organizations.

Established in first of December 1978 Niwano Foundation for Peace is actively involved in enhancing services related to research of the values of religions and sponsoring of peace, making activities associated with culture, religion, science and philosophy. Apart from this, the foundation has a scheme of donations aimed at the aforementioned services and in the areas of organizing international conferences. The Christian Arabic universities built in Palatine Israel were the results of the donations of the foundation. The main donation is the 38 million yen worth Niwano Peace Prize.

The primary objective of the foundation is to endow the world community with a fair service aimed at the establishment of World Peace by enhancing religious and cultural values. Nivano Foundation of Peace, actively involved in the enhancement of research activities on religious concepts, does a commendable job to restore peace on humanity through realms of culture, education, science, and philosophy.

As a token of accomplishment, Honorable Nikiyo Niwano established the Foundation of Peace in memory of the 40 years of the Riso Kosi Kai organization. Humanity is in need of religion to salvage dangers faced by the world from nuclear weapons, hunger and environmental pollution.

It is only from working honestly with mutual understanding we can achieve universal peace and prosperity among a diverse world community. This was the message delivered to the world by Hon Nikiyo Niwano at the inception of the Nikiyo Niwano Foundation for World Peace.

In 2002 I was appointed as the editor of the magazine "Echoes of Peace" published by Niwano Foundation for Peace. The column I wrote "Religion, Violence and Peace" was admired by many.

The Niwano Peace Price was established in 1983 with the objective honouring and motivating leaders and their organizations which have had successful missions in creating inter religious harmony among diverse international communities. The Niwano Peace Price was established by the Niwano Foundation. The primary objective of establishing it was to add value to such missions and motivate respective leaders to indulge in such course. To pay close attention on personnel and organizations in every part of the world that indulge in delivering services in the fields come under the Foundation's core objective, and to direct the attention of world community towards them was the secondary objective of the Price.

Nominations for the price are given to award-winning scholars around the world who indulge in missions aimed at establishing universal

peace. This prestigious list included the likes of Archbishop Helder P. Camera, Dr. Homer A. Jack, Rev Zhao Pu Chu, Dr. Philip A. Potter, The Muslim Congress, Rev Etai Yamadu, Prof. Norman Cousins and Dr. Hildegard Goss-Mayr, and I was destined to be one among these international intellectuals who received the honourable Niwano Peace Prize.

The prize consists of a certificate, medal and millions of Yen.

In order to avoid racial prejudice in the selection process, the Foundation calls nominations from recognized intellectuals around the world who are involve in philanthropic missions. The nominations are then brought into a strict scrutiny of a special committee of six scholars representing all major religions of the world. There were 724 nominations from 111 countries.

Questions arose within many as to why I, who submitted nominations representing Sarvodaya Shramdana Movement of Sri Lanka under the name Dr. A. T Ariyaratne, was selected for the prize. To answer such inquiries, the Foundation for Niwano Peace Prize had released the following press statement.

" Dr A T Ariyaratne is a devout Budhdhist. He is a young teacher who has understood well the great importance attached to preserving the traditional values of Sri Lanka. The 'Pot' containing the invaluable ancient Sri Lankan traditions. Dr Ariyaratne firmly believed what Mahatma Gandhi taught and propagated the non-violent social action formula would be a fitting solution. Keen on putting theory into action, not falling into the focus of government development plans, though citizens of the Country, unknown and unheard of, in short absolute misery enveloping them. There, he spread the golden

message, "Each of you individuals, look at yourself well, understand there is life in you proceed forward with collective effort and self confidence, work hard and become self-sufficient."

It is categorically stated that the commendable and humane services, prove that his efforts were not aimless and in vain but and rewarding.

Producing immediate results, Dr A T Ariyaratne has rendered this a section of the community still under oppression due to the caste system which groups people into high and low castes. He gave leadership to people to organize farms, construct roadways, tanks, drinking water wells, and clean waterways, provided advice on agriculture which benefitted the poor, revolutionized the education system by teaching the village kids to read and write. The urban teachers emulating him started to lead groups of students and their parents to very poor villages and started helping the villagers in numerous ways. The voluntary effort gradually started spreading and the pull was in the right direction for life to grow with meaning, as Buddhist, Christian, Muslim, Hindu all realized the importance of unity and practically they have proved it to society.

In addition to help creating a conducive environment for people to live harmoniously in the non-government field it is now the biggest people's participatory organization in the world. Although he very well accepted by the international community, his habit still is to mingle with the poor in his own country"

I had the honour of receiving the 9th Niwano Peace Prize. Thereafter I participated in several Niwano Peace Prize presentation ceremonies. At the 20th anniversary held in 2003 I delivered a special speech.

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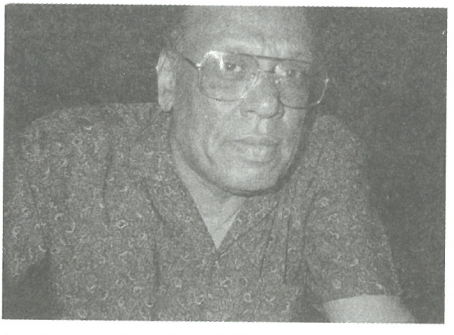
Unforgettable Lesson for The Ambassador

It was not on a silky carpet or petals of roses that Sarvodaya walked so far, but on a scabrous path full of enormous difficulties.

Once our programs aimed at helping the desperate poor started to roll out, all sort of insults and baseless accusations came out from people, including those who are well known to us. We faced many troubles as a result of obstacles and intimidations from governments, their power-hungry ministers and bias media.

The ambassador for Sri Lanka in Japan Chitambaranadan Mahendran was of a same kind who used to spread hatred and false allegations against us. The blunt weapon he tried to use against us was the false article published in government newspaper Daily News.



Ambassador for Sri Lanka in Japan Mr. Chitambaranadan Mahendran.

The ambassador, not knowing the mutual understanding between Mr. Robert White and me, had sent a copy of the particular newspaper article to Mr. Robert White, advising him to refrain from supporting Sarvodaya. The ambassador sent the article by fax to many of our supporters and friends too.

The ambassador never thought that all his abominable efforts harm the image of Sarvodaya will boomerang badly upon him.

The ambassador received a shocking reply letter from Mr. Robert White, which taught him an unforgettable lesson never to indulge in such deplorable acts.

ARC INTERNATIONAL LTD

Robert White
President
April 9 1992

Mr Chithambaranadan Mahendran,
Ambassador for Sri Lanka in Japan,
Democratic Republic of Sri Lanka,
1-14-1 Akasaka,
Minato,
Tokyo 107.

Mahendran Ambassador of Sri Lanka,

I have received a fax from your embassy of an article on Sarvodaya published in the Sri Lankan newspaper "Daily News" on 06th of April 1992. I was pleased to receive such since, I have read articles published on Sarvodaya for the last 18 months.

I see the content of those as something which violates the principles of news reporting. This is because during the past 18 months none of those government newspapers or government supporting newspapers carried any notion of the antagonistic acts conducted against Dr Ariyaratne. Mainly, these are direct outcomes of government's conspiratorial and fraudulent procedures which are based on incorrect

government attitudes towards the present action taken by Dr Ariyaratne.

In other words these accusations reported in media cannot be proven. They have failed to mention the 30 year long service rendered by Sarvodaya to the poverty stricken Sri Lankan communities and the true effective results reaped from such services. There are many organisations that benefit from our donations around the world. However, none of those organisations or institutes have shown strength and capability to surpass the level completeness and focused effectiveness of the services provided by the Sarvodaya Movement. We will continue to support Sarvodaya with financial aid. However, from today onwards we will stop all aid given with regards to the Government of Sri Lanka. I am relatively aware of the limitations in your capability being an agent of the governing political party, of knowing the standing of the governing party's attitude regarding the Sarvodaya Movement. Even though I am completely against the conduct of your government I am with the understanding of the above.

You should be ashamed of your government as a gentleman and a human being. I hope that you would silently act to prevent false accusations and humiliations directed against such invaluable human resources in Sri Lanka and successfully influence the responsible parties to prevent the same.

Yours,
Robert White

Copy:
Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne

* * *

I and Neetha with Mr. Robert White

A copy of Mr. White's answer letter had been delivered to Mr. Bradman Weerakoon who was the advisor to the president on international affairs.

The article appeared in Daily News under the heading had been written by someone under the fake name of Mahinda Senevirathne. We could easily get it confirmed that a writer under such name never existed.

The article filed with envious antagonism towards myself and Sarvodaya had badly falsified and downgraded the objective and the activities of our organization. Although the article carried a notion called "NGO Federation", there was no explanation of it. It was also a sort of forged concealment to avert hostile attention of not only the general reader of Daily News but also those who are connected to NGOs against Mahinda Senevirathne and his baseless, false

arguments. Inserting a photograph of myself in the article was a ridiculous move. He should have posted one of his photographs instead of mine, which would have helped everyone to recognize who he was and understand the reality. There is no doubt that the person who played behind the disguise of Mahinda Senevirathne is a known figure, and accordingly, provided they published a photograph of the same culprit.....

These people are really cowards. But as for ambassador Chitambaranadan, I believe that he learned and unforgettable lesson from the exemplary Mr. Robert White.

Even though I sent the proper reply to the editor of the Daily News with regard to Mahinda Senavirathne's article, it never got published. All the letters we sent with inception of this problem never got published due to press control imposed by the government. However, I did mention that I was glad about the fact that these baseless allegations paved the way for our organization to gain long term and lasting popularity that was quite divergent to the accusations made.

No government at that stage or earlier had introduced or granted a system that would facilitate easy flow of donations from foreign organizations.

Although never published, my letter had the answers to all the false allegations made by Senevirathne's article. "Sarvodaya gained more attention from the government's program of awakening rural community" was another allegation. He should be ashamed of these sort of unconfirmed allegations. By the time the government initiated the program for awakening the rural community, Sarvodaya had been

already in the same program for two decades! Therefore we are in the opposite side of above allegations, that is, in the truth.

The "Udagam" movement, and the related program "Awakening of Rural Community" was founded by Sarvodaya and presented to the government along with its name "Gam Udawa" along with the necessary assistance and guidance to carry them on.

Those days we directly endowed every assistance possible to the government under any circumstances when requested or otherwise, which Prime Minister Premadasa had publicly acknowledged. Government had directed various aid and assistance through Sarvodaya. I was always in favour of the same. He had estimated that the annual inflow of donations to us in that year was to increase by 50%.

The fact that our donors did not fall into the trap set by a particular section of media spreading fabricated accusations against us is worth drawing distinctive attention here. We never violated any bond we have entered into with them. It is in accordance with law we have always acted in our efforts to serve people.

He got the "Paada Yaathrawa" wrong as well. By the time Mahinda Rajapaksha and alliance organized a Paada Yaathra or Campaign on Foot rally from Colombo to Katharagama, Premadasa regime had imposed every obstacle possible to hamper our way ahead. Accordingly, I decided to join the rally. Minister Tiron Fernando had done everything possible to avert anybody from welcoming the Paada Yaathra in Moratuwa. The instance I heard this news, I made arrangements to welcome them at Rawathawatta, and joined the rally.

පාද යාත්‍රාවේ පිළිගැනීම මොරටුව සර්වෝදය ශාන්තිසේන මහතා, සර්වෝදය ශ්‍රමදාන ව්‍යාපාරයේ නායක ආචාර්ය ඒ. ටී. ආරියරත්න මහතා විසින් ඉතා උණුසුම් පිරිසක් විසින් පිළිගන්නා ලදී. අන්දමින් පිළිගනු ලැබූ අවස්ථාවකි මේ.

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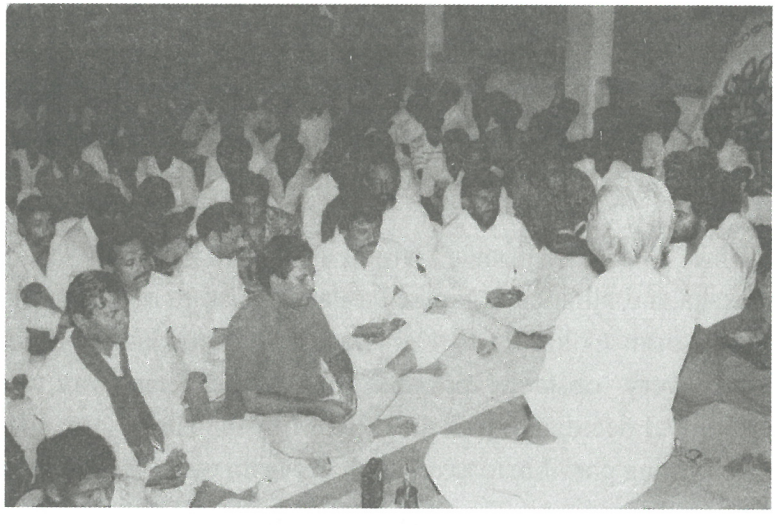
At the pada yathra welcome at Moratuwa



The conducting of the meditation program at Tangalle Bodhi Tree Terrace

I conducted the meditation program at Bodhi tree terrace in Tangalle because I was invited to it by several leaders. Everyone has the equal right to accept such an invitation. Those who attended the program were not foreigners, but our own leaders. Mahinda Rajapaksha, Dinesh Gunawardene, Rajitha Senarathne, Georaj Fernandopulle and Mahinda Abeyakoon were the prominent figures among the participants of the program.

The allegation made by the journalist called Mahinda Senevirathne was that what I did there was a political campaign, and I even got the involvement of foreigners. Since the core of democracy was to act avoiding the limitation of rank, I never got meditation mixed up with politics. Since I sent a CD containing a video of the meditation program along with the reply letter to Daily News, had it published, everyone could have seen whether the program contained a political agenda.

I was displeased with journalist Senevirathne's ignorance about the setbacks suffered by the countries like India, Bangladesh and the Philippines by trying to suppress non-governmental organizations.

As we always say, we do not create or destroy governments. It is the characteristic of power hungry politicians. Our full attention is always drawn towards the desperate poor. Our utmost aim is to work and live with people for the sake of their benefit. We are not antagonists of any government, but inoculate people with the truth. We are ready to suffer any loss in gaining and applying fundamental rights, which is equally applicable with regard to foreign aid.

It is true that I made a special statement at the conclusion of meditation program at Tangalle Bodhi tree terrace. "If my fundamental rights

were completely abolished, I would march forward with a force of five hundred thousand people to live and lawfully serve the people" was what I said.

The suppression of fundamental rights of everyone in Sarvodaya was the reason for that statement.

Allowing our donor organizations and foreign ministries to answer the questions asked by journalist Senevirathne, I taught journalist Senevirathne and his joined committee that the wealth and resources of Sarvodaya, its grateful people in this country and all over the world, and emasculate image was not built in one day. We could not be intimidated by any humiliation, dishonour, disgrace or suppression. I mentioned lastly that we would die embracing what is just and fair rather than allowing anybody to grab our resources by deception and intimidation. It was the core of a peoples' organization based on truth and justice.

At the start of the meditation session I mentioned that the core objective of meditating is to bring the mind to a state of equilibrium and getting to know the inner self. I explained how meditation help us to understand the realities influencing our life.

Being clenched to the truth is known as Sathiyagraha or passive resistance, and while being fused with or clenching to the truth the gigantic energy which immerses one is called Sathiyakkriya or act of truth, I explained.

Secondly, destruction of life-sustaining social-balancing systems and pollution of natural, social and psychological environment takes place every day.

Thirdly, as human beings our fundamental rights are violated. The suppresion of our freedom has become a daily routine.

Fourthly, use of armed forces is widespread, intensifying the torment of the people.

I do not know if anyone can prove that there is a political agenda involved in the above statements and teachings.

As I was in outstation for a field visit for rural development projects, my eldest daughter Charika had sent a letter thanking Mr. Robert White.

"We are earnestly pleased to receive the honourable patronage of you and our valuable supporters and contributors from all over the world in an era in which my father and the Sarvodaya Movement have come under our government's continuous antagonistic conspiracies" She had mentioned in it. Further, she had reiterated that there was nothing called a board of united non-governmental organizations, nor was there a journalist under the name of Mahinda Senevirathne.

In Japan I came to know of another attempt of ambassador Mahendran's aimed at dishonouring us. When I and my wife Neetha went to Japan in 1992 to receive the Niwano Peace Prize, we joined with the chairman of Asian Cultural Organization Mr. Kamisakamuto and his wife on a visit to the Shiba area, during which we heard a radio of ambassador Mahendran trying to spread the culpable that Sarvodaya received funds from LTTE.

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The Ambassador's Resistance for Niwano Peace Prize

On the 6th of April 1992 I, Neetha and Nimna arrived in Tokyo to receive Niwano Peace Prize, and to participate in several related ceremonies. We were warmly welcomed at the Narita airport by director of the Niwano Peace Foundation Mr. Orno and the Minami project officer Mr. Hayapi and Mr. Nagai of the publication section. They had arranged accommodation for us at the suite 636 at the Century height hotel on the 6th floor.

Mr. Minami, Hayapi and Mr. Fujita came to brief us about the programs ahead. Ven Arnanda Thero and Christian Sorensot joined us for dinner. Professor Jin Hirano came to see us as well.

Honourable Mr. Nagamuna, Mr. Minami, Mr. Ono and Mr. Haapi of Niwano Peace Foundation officially met me on the morning of the 8th. Mr. Nagamuna said that he was extremely pleased to present the Niwano Peace Prize to me.

Along with Mr. Nagai and Fujima we went to see the palace of the Emperor and museum.

Mr. Kondo and Harsha Liyanage came to see us in the afternoon. I engaged in personal discussion with Mr. Kondo in which he revealed an interesting story which had been buried so far: Once when Sasakawa Institute proposed to establish an endowment of one million dollars to Sarvodaya, Sri Lanka ambassador for Japan in those days had proposed it should be diverted to the university. When the ambassador retired, the file shelved, which the new ambassador

Chitambaranadan Mahendran abruptly came across. He immediately summoned officers of Sasakawa and demanded that the endowment should be diverted to Presidential Fund of President Premadasa. Mr. Kondo dramatically explained how Sasakawa discarded his demand.

Mr. Mahendran had made two more attempts to compel Sasakawa Foundation to abolish aids to Sarvodaya.

The only outcome of these unworthy, deplorable acts was none other than helping Sarvodaya to gain more popularity, and in the other end Mahendran getting his dignity tarnished along with the President's.

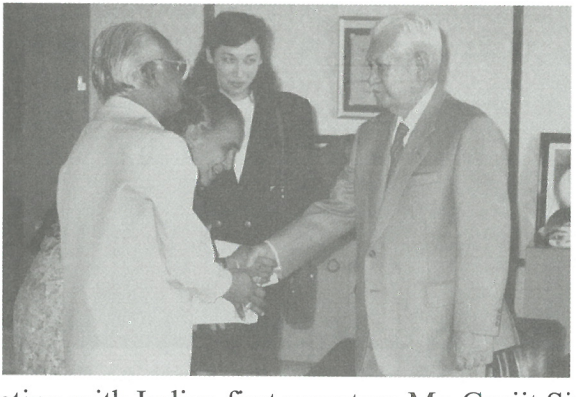
After the conclusion of that meeting, I spent the rest of the day at the Masushita institute. There I met the director of it Mr. Joko, Mr. Okada and several of my old friends. I delivered a lecture to about a hundred students under the heading "New World Trends". I was donated one hundred Yen for the lecture. The audience donated 7,200 Yen collected among them.

The director of Masushita Institute making the donation.
Standing left to me is Neetha.

After the session we went to see Kamakura temple which houses a720 years old 44 feet tall bronze statue. There is memorial inscribed as "Nahi Vayrayne Vayraani" on it in the name of the late president J. R. Jayawardane.

with the priests of Kamakura Temple

On the following day, the Indian first secretary Mr. Gurrit Singh came to meet me, and we had a two hour's discussion. Neetha's pen pal Mrs. Mathsuko Hiroshi along with her husband and daughter met Neetha after 35 years. We had dinner with the vice president of Japan's social Welfare Board Mr. Abbey and his wife.



Meeting with Indian first secretary Mr. Gurjit Singh

On the 11th morning at a place called Viyoda I delivered a lecture for a gathering of about 300 representatives from Korea, Taiwan, Indonesia, Singapore and Sri Lanka. Dr. Shiro Abey conducted the seminar. In the evening Mr. Kamisakamoto Saan and his son came to present the Japanese translation of the book "Delgaha Yata Gedara".

Mr. Kamsakamoto presenting the Japanese translation of Delgaha Yata Gedara to Neetha

Peace Prize Ceremony

So far we had only participated in intermediary events being organized prior to the peace price ceremony.

The grand event inaugurated at six of the clock, with the official welcome party. The president of Resokosi-Kai Nichiko Niwano, Kanjiro Niwano, Nagamuni, and selection committee member Philip Potter were present.

They warmly welcomed me and my family with this well-organized dinner party.

The Peace Prize presentation ceremony was held on the 12th. Having seen the half page article with my photo in the Japan Times, ambassador Mahendran had immediately contacted Niwano Foundation over the phone to protest against it. How can it be that such individuals are deemed suitable for position of ambassador?

We were accompanied to the presentation assembly. We were warmly welcomed by Hon Nikiyo Niwano, the president of Nikiyo Niwano Foundation. All the officers of Nikiyo Niwano Foundation and Risokosi-Kai, education minister professor Hirano, president of religious convention Satherland Potter and Dr. Khan were present. We entered the honourable assembly with Hon Niwano amid the cheering of a crowd of 300 invitees.

The absence of the ambassador for Sri Lanka or his representative was a highlight. However the presence of Ven Mapalagamage Vupulasra Thero, Dr. Harsha Liyanage and wife, Mr. Samaranyaka, Dr. Robert Rassle, Indian first secretary Gurgith Sin was a pleasure and encouragement for me.

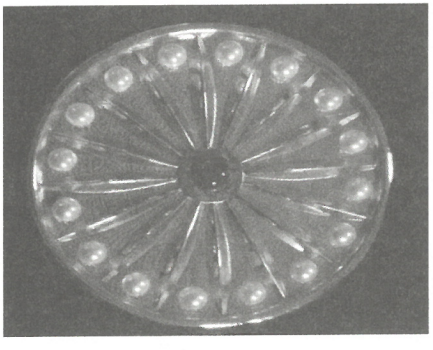
The ceremony began after religious proceedings. Chairman Nagamuna delivered a speech explaining why I was selected for the prize. He justified as to how I became the most suitable candidate for the prize among 724 applicants from 111 counties.

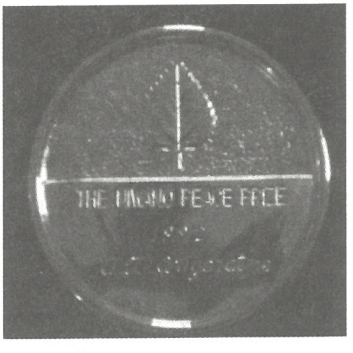
Then professor Osama Muro, doing a detailed introduction of me, said that I exposed the essential track to progress decades ahead, before anyone even thought of it. He said that Ariyaratne did not want

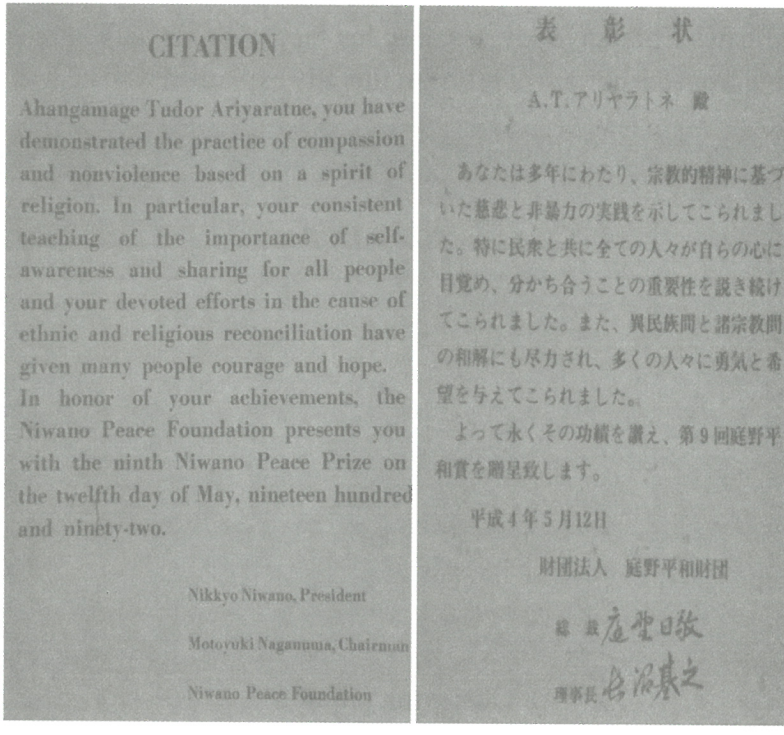
certificates from anybody, because his face with his authentic smile arising from the bottom of his heart literally explained who he was.

Observing religion

The prestigious Niwano Price Prize comprising with the certificate, the medal(seal) 20 million Yen was presented to me on the stage by chairman Hon Nikiyo Niwano amid the cheering of the audience.







CITATION

Ahangamage Tudor Ariyaratne, you have demonstrated the practice of compassion and nonviolence based on a spirit of religion. In particular, your consistent teaching of the importance of self-awareness and sharing for all people and your devoted efforts in the cause of ethnic and religious reconciliation have given many people courage and hope.
In honor of your achievements, the Niwano Peace Foundation presents you with the ninth Niwano Peace Prize on the twelfth day of May, nineteen hundred and ninety-two.

Nikkyo Niwano, President

Motoyuki Nagamuma, Chairman

Niwano Peace Foundation

表　彰　状

A.T.アリヤラトネ　殿

あなたは多年にわたり、宗教的精神に基づいた慈悲と非暴力の実践を示してこられました。特に民衆と共に全ての人々が自らの心に目覚め、分かち合うことの重要性を説き続けてこられました。また、異民族間と諸宗教間の和解にも尽力され、多くの人々に勇気と希望を与えてこられました。

よって永くその功績を讃え、第9回庭野平和賞を贈呈致します。

平成4年5月12日

財団法人　庭野平和財団

総裁 庭野日敬

理事長 名沼基之

Next was the speech by Hon. Niwano, and it was a quite unexpected recommendation of my services. I never expected such an elaborated appreciation from a person of that calibre. I kept my mind awakened, meditating throughout the session. After the speeches of chairman of Japan's Religious Federation and minister of education and cultural affairs, I made my speech.

After the conclusion of the prize-giving ceremony, it was time for the lunch. Mr. Gin Hirano cheered and opened the lunch. Professor Kobe and many of my friends from all over Japan had attended, who, after the lunch, queued to congratulate us.

I, Hon Niwano and Neetha

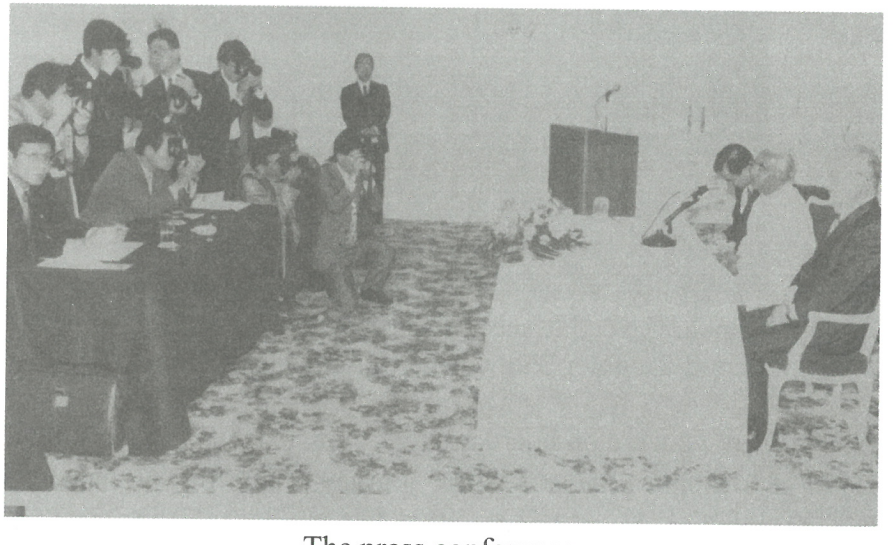
at the lunch. I, Neetha, second son Jeewan, third son Diyath, second daughter Sadiwa and third daughter Nimna.

At 04:00pm we were on board a bullet train, reaching Tokyo Grand Hotel at 07:00pm after a 3 hours' journey. Three of our Japanese friends joined us. My oldest daughter had faxed a copy of an article which had appeared in the Sunday Observer newspaper in Sri Lanka.

It had been written under the heading: "1.2 million Yen Advertisement for Ariyarathne" which meant that 1.2 million yen out of 20 million yen received had been spent for the advertisement. Further, the article had said that the advertisement about Ariyaratne by Ariyaratne boasted about his services. The article also contained criticism said to have been supplied by an anonymous critique.

The article was an obvious example of how the government media of Sri Lanka conspired to perpetuate the president by distorting the image of popular leaders of people.

At the press conference held at Kiyoto Grand Hotel with the participation of around 40 journalists with over 40 million clientèle, I showed the article and explained the tragedy the government had cast upon the media and journalism in Sri Lanka. Various newspapers carried the story for two days.



The press conference

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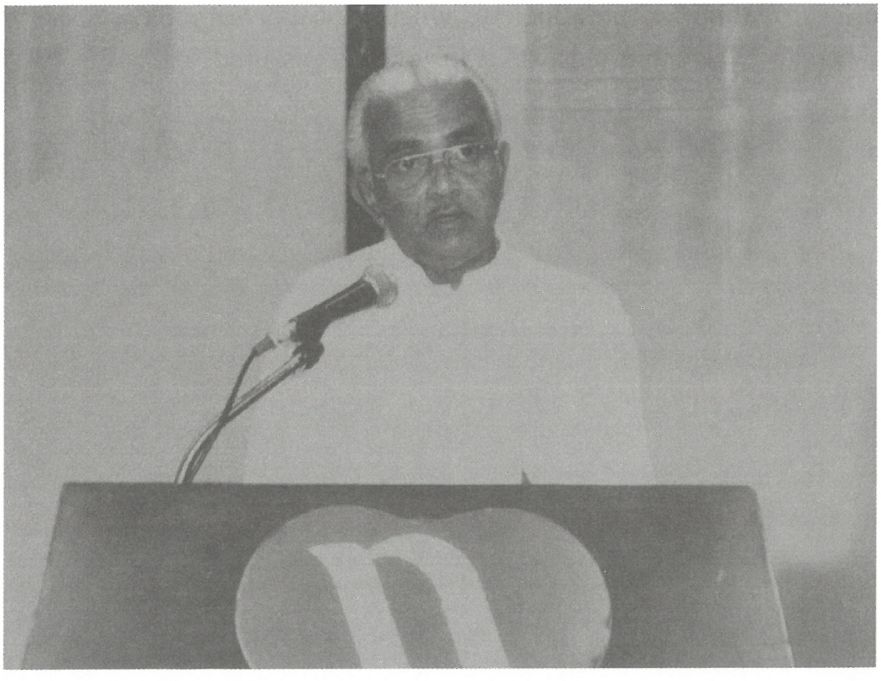
People's Agenda for Global Awakening
Commemorative Lecture by Dr A T Ariyaratne at The Ninth Niwano Peace Prize Award Ceremony



Speech at ninth Niwano Peace Prize Ceremony

President Rev. Nikkayo Niwano, Rev. Motoyuki Nagamuna, Chairman of the Niwano peace Foundation and Members of the Board, Mr kunio Hatoyama, The Minister of Education, Science and Culture, His Eminence Yasuri Hirose President of Japan Religions League, Professor Osama Muro, distinguished guests, sisters and brothers.

I am grateful to the Niwano Peace Foundation for selecting me to receive the ninth Niwano Peace Prize. With renewed faith in non-violence and justice, I accept this prize. It is my duty to share this honour with my colleagues in the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka, who have chosen to dedicate their time, thought and effort to building a new society, which we call a Sarvodaya Society, where the well being and awakening of all are assured.

Audience ninth Niwano Peace Prize Ceremony

I am happy and thankful that the Niwano Peace Foundation has enabled my wife, Neetha Dhammachari to participate with me in this historic and solemn ceremony. Almost from the inception of the movement she has been constantly by my side like a shadow, sharing with me the risks and dangers as well as moments of recognition and joy that accompanied our struggle for social transformation.

The eminent personages who have preceded me in receiving this prize have set high standards of sacrifice and dedication in the cause of peace. Living up to their example places a great responsibility on me. It is an even more difficult task to achieve the noble ideals that our most revered Rev. Nikkyo Niwano held before us when he founded and inspired Risso Kosei-kai, the Niwano Peace Foundation, and the World Conference on Religion and Peace. He expects us to serve humanity by perfecting in ourselves the bodhisattava qualities that are inherent in all of us.

Hence this is an appropriate occasion for me to re-appraise the humble service I may have rendered to fellow living beings and re-dedicate myself to reaching higher levels of selfless service to mankind.

I am fortunate to have been born in a country where the teachings of Lord Gauthama Buddha are readily accessible. According to the

ancient Sri Lanka Legendary chronicle, the Mahaavamsa or "Great Lineage", Lord Buddha visited Sri Lanka on three occasions. To this day, thousands of pilgrims flock to the places by His presence on particular dates when the moon is full and perform all forms of Dana, or alms giving, sila or keeping the precepts, and Bhavana, or meditation.

Emperor Asoka's son, Arahat, Maha Mahinda, formally established the Buddha Sasana in Sri Lanka in the third century B.C, the Buddha's teachings were set down in writing by monks who until then had passed them down orally. Thus the Noble Triple Gem, which consists of the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha, became the refuge of Buddhists in our country.

In the Maha Mangala Sutra, Lord Buddha expounded 38 blessings, or auspicious characteristics, that lead human beings and societies to peace and happiness. These include, Self-control, Association with the Learned and the Wise, Looking after one's Family, liberality, respectable work, abstaining from intoxicants, listening to the Dhamma and joining in Dhamma discussions at appropriate times, and Mindfulness.

When I look back, I realize how fortunate I am to have been born into a family of parents, aunts, uncles, and other elders who knew the sutras by heart and tried their best to live by them in their daily lives. It was a further blessing that our home was next to a temple where learned and disciplined monks lived. Before we entered primary school we were taught in the temple school by monks and learned laymen. My education was thus founded on Buddhist spiritual goals and moral values. This spiritual-moral foundation could not be shaken by the

later conditioning of my mind in college, where I was exposed to the worlds of science and technoloy, economics and politics, capitalism and communism, and so on. All of these lacked the depth of vision needed for spiritual contentment. Naturally I had to choose a path life, for life and through life, that would give me the f living every moment. This is how, thirty four years ago, I decided to surrender myself completely to the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha and to help build a Sarvodaya Social Order in my country and the World.

A Dual Awakening Process

The Word Sarvodaya was coined by Mahatma Gandhi to describe a new social order which he envisioned as bveing very different from the capitalist and communist systems prevalent at that time. Literally it means "The Welfare of All". With my Buddhidt outlook, when I came across the word Sarvodaya I interpreted it as "the Awakening of All". buddha literally means the "Awakened One". Those of us who aspire to enlightenment or are Bodhisatvas are those who tread the Buddha way, or the path of awakening. We should therefore strive to awaken ourselves to the full as we strive for the awakening of all.

I cannot awaken myself unless I help awaken others. Other cannot awaken unless I do. So it an interconnected and interdependent dual process of awakening oneself and society that we have chosen in the Sarvodaya.

In the Palli language, Lord Budhdha's admonition to us was:

"Dukkappaththca Niddukka

Bhayappththaca Nibbaya

Sokappaththaca Nissoka

Honthu Sabbe Panino"

This means:

"By Helping

Those who suffer physically to overcome physical suffering,

Those who are in fear to overcome fear,

Those who suffer mentally to overcome mental suffering,

Those who are in fear to overcome fear,

Those who suffer mentally to overcome mental suffering,

Be of service to all living beings"

This is Sarvodaya in the most profound sense. Transcending all man-mae barriers of caste, race, religion, nationality and other ways of separating human beings Sarvodaya serves all. Sarvodaya works to remove the causes of human physical suffering, anxiety, and fear. Working for interreligious and interracial harmony, eradcating poverty and empowering the poor, promoting peace by religious education and spiritual development programmes, engaging in every kind of peace making process, taking non-violent action against human-rights violations and other forms of injustice, are all part of the Sarvodaya of activities.

Interdependence

Society is composed of individuals, families, village communities, urban groups, national populations and humanity as a whole we are all living on one planet and are commonly subjected to the limitations imposed by nonrenewable resources, ecological balances, cimate and temperature changes, environmental factors, psychological and social dependencies, physical survival, and other forms of animal and plant

life. So the survival, existence, and awakening of everyone of us lis dependent on all other living and nonliving entities of our planet.

For the sake of building practical programmes we formula the Sarvodaya Goal of the Awakening of All in terms of six objectives, which are:

Purna Paurushodaya	or	"Personality Awakening"
Kutumbodaya	or	"Family Awakening"
Gramodaya	or	"Vilage community Awakening"
Nagarodaya	or	"Urban Community Awakening"
Deshodaya	or	"National Community Awakening"
Vishvodaya	or	"World Community Awakening"

Each of these objectives relaltles to and enhances the other. All these objectives were to be achieved in six integrated sectors. These were the spiritual, Moral, Cultural, Social, Economic, and political dimensions related to each objective. We kept before ourselves the fascinating and adventurous task of reaching the very highest goal we could conceive of and adopted a concrete programme of action in the mid-nineteen fifties.

Community Awakening

In the psychological and social environment in which we started our work, there was both the positive and a negative response to our work. The positive response came mostly from the poor and powerless. They lived in rural areas and urban slums. The negative response came from the rich and powerful, with the exception of a few who were spiritually inclined. In spite of 450 years f colonial influence, the rural poor

generally preserved their spiritual, moral and cultural values. The fact that they ware excluded from the colonial economy and isolated from the colonial influence helped to preserve their values. In contrast, the elite classes had almost totally abandoned their traditional and sustainable lifestyles. They sought to integrate themselves into colonial society, and to the extent they were successful they gave up their past. So it was not surprising that they were not inclined to support Sarvodaya activities.

The economic and political systems of the ruling elites were also fashioned under colonial tutelage. So the concept of the awakening of all, based on Buddhist values, was not easy to implement.

initially, the only resources we had besides the values were the time, thought, and efforts we would pool on a self-help basis. This we called Shramadana, or "the gift of labour". Our first target was villagel communities that we subjected to caste, or social and economic discrimination. Over 200 communities in which we worked during the first stage of our movement were such villages. Subsequently, when we invited into other villages, we went, and todate we are working in several thousands of villages in Sri Lanka. Tens of thousands of young and old have joined hands for this self-development effort.

The Sarvodaya objective is to create a society that is neither rich nor poor, where every individual, family, and community is awakened to a more contented, peaceful, and just life. These small units should be the fundamental human groups that should build a new, just, and nonviolent world society. We believe that national and international political and economic structures should be solidly restructured on the basis f human centered social and community rganizations in order to

create a better world. It is in such a new global society that the Awakening or well-being of all will be ensured. This kind of society is diffrent from capitalist and communist models. Sarvodaya rejects the idea of a welfare State but believes in a welfare society. It rejects centralization of political and economic power and strives to build minimally controlled, mostly self-regulated communities. The decisive factor in building such a society is the mutuality and the community that the people build to manage themselves, their resources, and the environment. With a variety of well-integrated community development programmes Sarvodaya is trying to achieve this objective. Both in Sri Lanka and several other countries, Sarvodaya has actively promoted such people centered programmes for world renewal.

Gentle persuasion

It was 34 years ago in Sri Lanka that we started sacrificing our time, thought, efforts and resources to achieve this ideal. We concentrated on awakening individuals, families, and communities to their highest potential. This was no easy task in a country plagued with a myriad of conflicting ideologies, technologies, and politico-bureaucratic structures. The system of power oriented party politics had progressively reached every nook and corner of the country in four decades, and Sarvodaya had to content with the conflicting anti-development processes they released. In every conceivable man-made controversy, our people were divided by their infiltration that was inimical to their welfare.

Savodaya was able to stem this tide by refusing to align itself with any power group and evolving itself into a national movement, winning

the hearts of several million rural people in every district and subdistrict of Sri Lanka. The bloody insurrections in the South and the civil Iwar in the north did not divert our attention. Nor did we take opportunistic stances for less worthwhile goals.

We believed in the innate goodness of all human beings. We tried build a spiritual and psychological infrastructure transcending all barriers while the nation was getting atomized by political and racial rivalries. We resisted the temptation to side with any political party or anyone in power. On the contrary, we always upheld the fundamental rights of every citizen of our country to live in peace with justice.

We have never compromised the principle that nonviolence and justice under the law are the only means by which conflicts can be satisfactorily and amicably resolved. As a people's organization, we have used social welfare, self-development and advocacy as the three means to achieve our objectives. Sarvodaya has gained global recognition for its record of welfare services and people centered development activities. At the same time, we have criticized by certain political activists for not doing enough in the way of advocacy and confrontational actions in the face of blatant human rights violations and political and economic injustices.

We did not join the confrontational groups. Instead we followed a path of gentle, silent persuasion as well as one of building alternative social political and economic structures that are outside the establishment but within the law. These alternative structures prepared people to control their own institutions. Instead of having so called democracy being imposed on them from above, people became participant

beneficiaries f a system of democracy that they themselves were evolving from below.

We succeeded in organizing in over 8600 villages of Sri Lanka the elements of the Sarvodaya society where an excellent social infrastructure of pre-school children, school going children, youth, mothers, farmers, craftsmen, and other elders participated in satisfying their own basic human needs. We embarked very successfully on a Sarvodaya Economic Enterprises Development Services programme. This is an alternative path to awaken and empower the poorest of the poor economically as well as spiritually.

We struggled along this upward path of social change based on the highest conceivable indigenous values. We received maximum cooperation from all religions, political, administrative, and even security sectors of our society. This task was a thousand times more difficult than getting into a political office. The joy one gets in the process of this innovative task may even be a million times greater than kind that comes from wielding power.

The very success of our work with individuals, families, and rural and urban communities has aroused fear and perhaps envy among those who wield economic and political power at the highest level. This is quite understandable and we are not disturbed by it. We all know that the Western Model of development is unbalanced. It has no spiritual or moral objective.

It is purely materialistic in intent as well as content. Exploitation of scarce resources to the maximum, applying profit maximizing technologies to the full, fueling human greed through a variety of

commercial techniques, and catering to the utmost gratification of the five senses are this model's salient features. It has brought affluence to a small fraction of the world population in industrialized countries while the vast majority of people in the world are sunk in absolute poverty, powerlessness and deprivation. Even the rich are experiencing spiritual poverty. The affluent young in particular are moving rapidly towards a materialistic dead end in life. They enjoy lifestyles in which commitments have become quite unnecessary, but then they find, without a commitment to serve others that their lives become "empty-purpose".

It is a sad fact that the wielders of political and economic power do not seem to appreciate the need for a different model of development that is more appropriate to the challenges humanity faces today. Sarvodaya is such a proven model. It has proved in practice that self-reliance, community participation, and community self-development can be utilized to satisfy the most pressing needs of rural communities without destroying their spiritual, moral, and cultural values. Sustainable development can become a reality only if we promote this development model, building from the bottom up, reversing the kind of development systems that try to build from top down that were tried after the Second World War.

A New Model Needed

Large development projects whose ultimate result was making the rich richer, and the poor poorer have received huge financial resources by way of grants and loans from bilateral and multilateral aid programmes. This inflow of capital to the supra structure of our societies have resulted in an unprecedented concentration of power

and wealth in the hands of a few while community efforts have become weaker because of a lack of capital and community self-management power.

Organizations like Sarvodaya are assisted by voluntary bodies such as the Risso Kosei-kai. This kind of voluntary support is a drop in the ocean compared to the massive inflow of capital to the established system based on greed for wealth and power. Concerned individuals, groups, voluntary organizations and governments in affluent societies help the poorest of the poor by directly associating themselves with those whose aim is organizing the poor. But the fact is that with our own meager resources, however motivated we are, we cannot stem the tide of organized greed, ill will, and ignorance imposed on our helpless people by an aggressive market economy, centralized political authority, soulless bureaucracy, and controlled mass media.

How long can our people tolerate an increasingly hazardous combination of psychological and physical environmental pollution, loss of fundamental human rights, the breakdown of age old spirituo-moral value systems and social harmony, the daily loss of human lives and valuable social assets through civil war, and the frightening militarization of our country? What is true of Sri Lanka is equally true of many other neighboring countries.

It would be no exaggeration to say that the countries of South Asia have reached a stage from which they can progress no further. To put it bluntly, the conventional thinkers who decide the fates of our people are deeply mired in an old rut. All over the region, pockets of civil war have grown, and continue to grow, which the central authorities cannot put down. thousands of people are rendered refugees, injured,

or deprived of their lives each month in terrible violence that saps the soul of our region.

For instance, in the north-east of Sri Lanka and in India's Kashmir, Punjab, Assam, and Nagaland the fires of ethnic separatism appear to be unquenchable. On the other hand, despite calims of high economic growth and macro economic progress, the problem of poverty that afflicts more than half the world's population appears to be insoluble. The bottom 40 percent of the Sri Lankan population who obtained a little less thn 20 percent of the national income in 1973 received only about 10 percent by 1987. In a nutshell, the politico-economic system that our region inherited from the colonial rulers has failed. It has come to a deadend, just like the communist system in the former soviet Union and its satellites.

More than 2500 years ago the teachings of Lord Buddha found a home in Sri Lanka. The Mahavamsa says that before Lord Buddha attained attained parinibbana he summoned the gods and asked them to protect the island of Lanka, where his teachings would be safeguarded. It is the memory of those ancient words that has instilled in the majority of Sri Lankans a deep identification of their land with Buddhism. Even while Buddhism decayed in India, the teachings of Lord Buddha flourished in Sri Lanka.

So, it is not strange again. Sri Lanka should take with gratitude from India the teachings and practice of Mahatma Gandhi and give new life to it through Sarvodaya. Those of us who belong to Sarvodaya in Sri Lanka see a historic duty and opportunity before us. We believe that Sri lanka is small enough for us to launch a big experiment. We believe that with love, liberality, and sacrifice we can reawaken our people to

unity and peace. We hope that what we achieve in Sri Lanka we will be able to offer bank to India, to South Asia and to the world that seeks a new way.

The Agenda

Those of us who stand for Non-violence, Justice, and Peace, should stand in solidarity and work on a People's Agenda for "Global Awakening." Such an agenda, I believe, should have the following five items.

The first item should be that of promoting personality awakening programmes in all communities of the world according to their own historical, cultural, and religious realities.

What do we mean by personality and personality awakening? The concepts we have and meanings we give may differ from culture to culture, and religion to religion. Yet, understanding what is meant by personality and its final fulfillment has a spiritual goal, such as nirvana or realization of God. The more such self-recognition occurs in individuals the weaker will be the evil forces of greed, ill will,, and ignorance that control our societies. What is important is not religious rivalries and ideological differences but the spiritual unity of religion, which ennobles human personalities.

According to Lord Buddha's teachings, an ever changing nama-rupa or Body-Mind Complex is subject to suffering and is sustained by our craving and our ignorance of reality.

By cultivating liberality, morality, and mindfulness, we can cultivate a right understanding of our Five aggregates of Clinging to desires that

are subject to Dependent Co-arising. This Lord Buddha called puncha Upadanakkhanda subject to paticca Samuppada Dhamma. Unless Bhavana, or meditation, is practiced a Buddhist cannot grasp this teaching of personality awakening. But if the society we live in is one that encourages people to became involved in consumerist binges and in rat races to out do one another, people will believe that they have no time for meditation but only time for external exertion.

The right kind of religious education with regular practice of mindfulness, therefore, should become an important component of our educational system. Natrition, physical, mental, and social health care are prerequisites for personality-awakening programmes. A massive chain of pre-school children's care centres, school children's activities, mothers' groups, youth activities, preventive, curative, and after-care programmes for drug addicts and alcoholics, nutrition and health-care activities, water and sanitation projects, literacy and religious instruction programmes, peace brigades, peace marches, and so on cater to such needs. Sarvodaya work programmes foster all these activities with the cooperation of the people who are themselves the beneficiaries.

Those of us who dedicate ourselves to service to others should not our own personality awakening when we are engrossed in serng. Right through my Sarvodaya life I have been subjected to ridicule, abuse, insult, and oppression. of course, I have received love and recognition as well. In the last three years I have been the victim of a government controlled hostile media campaign. Dozens of death threats to myself and my family were received from unknown sources. Sarvodaya properties were unjustly seized and endless harassments of our programme were manipulated by certain powerful authorities. All

these obstacles strengthened our personalities and brought us closer to peace of mind, which is essential to spiritual awakening. After all, we are on a samsaric journey, a cycle of birth and death, and we want to attain supreme happiness in Nirvana. All these are experiences that help us to seek perfection leading to supreme enlightens. Lord Buddha called the development of these perfections paramitas.

The second item of our agenda should be a practical network of all such persons, groups, and organizations within countries and between countries to exchange experiences and give mutual support.

Close relationships can be built up among ourselves based on both physical proximity and spiritual affinity. When enough people who share spiritual values and experience come together, they generate a critical mass of spiritual consciousness that becomes a tangible reality and empowers much larger number of people. The relationship between Sarvodaya and Risso Kosei-Kai is such a form of empowering and networking. We exchanges visits of our member, share resources, learn from each other and try to strengthen both ourselves and other similar efforts in the world. While Risso Kosei-kai was the first japanese organization to establish fraternal relations with Sarvodaya, I am happy to state that several other individuals, groups, community organizations, and national non governmental organizations, are now in the process of building development co-operation links with us. The people of Japan, I believe, have to play a critical role in building the new world community we aspire for.

Sarvodaya has succeeded in taking the Sarvodaya message to many industrialized and non-industrilized countries of the world. Large numbers of young people from around the world have come and

worked in Sarvodaya. Sarvodaya volunteers have served in other countries of the world. I spent a considerable part of my time in the last twenty five years carrying the message of nonviolence, peace, and justice around the world to many countries and international forums. We should continue this.

The third item on our agenda should be to promote in our own homes and societies, lifestyles based on universally accepted values, and sustainable, nonviolent systems of distribution and consumption with no regards for national boundaries.

In Sarvodaya homes and communities, we follow a system that we call the Ten Basic human needs satisfaction programme. our objective is to build a lifestyle free of poverty, with a clean environment, an adequate supply of clean water, a balanced diet, simple clothing, simple housing, primary health care; to meet basic energy needs and communication requirements; and to provide educational facilities and opportunities for cultural and spiritual development.

A simple lifestyle, as advocated by Sarvodaya is particularly relevant when the limits to the planet's capacity to sustain extravagant, materially affluent lifestyles has become clear. On the other hand, the value of such a lifestyle in promoting human happiness, even among the global minority fortunate enough to enjoy it. is open to question.

To those of us who believe that a contented society is one that strives for spiritual fulfillment, an affluent life style in which desires are artificially created and easily satisfied will be a distraction. This is the reason advised us to avoid both self-mortfication and self-indulgence. *Majjama Prathipada* the middle path is the most noble.

In turn, those who see the extravagant lifestyle of a few and live in that annoyance will find it difficult to resist the natural temptations to imitate it. Because of the inter-connection of the lifestyles of everyone, the world needs to reorient itself to lifestyles that are neither poor nor affluent, so that the lifestyles of some will not undermine those of the majority.

The fourth item is building strong spiritual, psychological, and social infrastructures among members of rural and urban communities consisting of not more that 100 families. The size of the community should be such that every member, young or old, should be able to know and communicate with all other members.

The present day violence within our countries and between our countries is rooted in two broad sectors. One is our own ignorant mind, which generate evil thoughts of greed and ill will all the time. The second is our social, economic, and political structures in which these evil thoughts of greed and ill will can be organized for collective manifestations. The larger the political and economic structure we establish, the greater will be the concentration of power in the hands of a few.

Truth present day violence within our countries and between our countries is rooted in two broad sectors. One is our own ignorant minds, which generate evil thoughts of greed and ill will all the time. The second is our social, economic, and political structures in which these evil thoughts of greed and ill will can be organized for collective manifestations. The larger the political and economic structures we establish, the greater will be the concentration of power in the hands of a few.

Truth, nonviolence, selflessness, beneficence, morality, spirituality, forgiveness, and so on are virtues that can manifest themselves best in our personal lives and to some extent in our families and small communities. Certainly they cannot take root and grow in governments or corporations, which by nature are spiritually dead, mindless, and heartless. Presidents and prime ministers, kings and queens, ministers and diplomats, bureaucrats and generals, corporation heads and executives - they may all be pure-hearted and high-minded men and women. But the very nature of the gigantic governmental, military, industrial and financial establishments do not allow these people to use their spiritual values in controlling and directing these soulless structures.

All traces of humanity in both capitalist and communist systems vanished decades ago. The structures of communism are collapsing as we can witness today in Eastern Europe and the former soviet Union. But the triumph of capitalism will not be permanent either. Those who are holding together big institution by sheer brute force or tight administrative, financial, and communications controls have also, in essence, collapsed morally. When environmental, ecological, and health hazards brought about by abuse of technology and the use of modern weaponry reach critical proportions, these too will collapse in plain sight before our very eyes. Finding alternative systems and keeping them in place and in working order is the responsibility of all concerned world citizens such as you who are gathered here.

Community Control

The fifth and the last item of the People's Agenda for Global Awakening that I propose is to establish self-govering communities

globally, where spiritual, moral, cultural, social, economic, and political activities are under the direct control of people.

Once a sufficient number of sustainable human communities are organized around the world. controlling and managing own physical, social and structural environments, then a global process of creating a new society will start to evolve both horizontally and from the bottom up.

To the extent that the present managers of large societies realize the importance of this kind of horizontal global awakening, the process will be expedited. Also, a progressive reduction in the manufacture and use of even conventional weapons of destruction will be achieved. Consumption of non-renewable and environmentally dangerous energy resource will also be reduced.

The need for coercive instruments of government will no longer exist. Thousands of self-governing communities will emerge on this planet. To a very large extent they will be self-sustaining. They will be living harmoniously with nature. Every cultural and sub-cltural entity will be preserved and add luster to society. People who have mastered themselves and are uplifted in spirit will be able to play a leading role instead of being driven to the peripheries, as they are in highly centralized systems.

As a global community we have an extremely advanced body of scientific knowledge and technological know-how. Unwisely we have used it to satisfy our animal instincts and sensual desires. When these powerful instruments fell into the hands of selfish, greedy, cruel people who were able to capture power under centralized systems,

they devastated nature, marginalized millions of people who had no access to that modern knowledge and technology, and waged two world wars and hundreds of other smaller ones. On the other hand, as a global community, we still possess an immense wealth of spiritual wisdom. We use these mostly in our own limited ways confined to ourselves and our families, with a view to attaining a better life with the next birth or in heaven. Now the time has come when science and technology on one hand and spiritual wisdom on the other have to be synthesized on a global scale to build a nobler more content, just and peaceful global community.

On thus memorable occasion I pledge before this agust assembly that I shall devote the rest of my life with my colleagues in my country and around the world to continue with a greater dedication our Sarvodaya Services to build such a society. At the same time, I shall vigorously pursue my own role of self-realizetion by progressively trying to reduce my own craving, ill will and ignorance, so that I will be a worthy member of the kingdom of heaven on this planet earth.

May I conclude with Buddha's worlds from Dhammapada.

"Arogya parama labha
Santhushti paramam shanam
Viswasa parama nati
Nibbanam paramam sukham"

Good health is the greatest gain
Contentment is the greatest wealth
Trust is the greatest kinsman
Nibbana - Freedom - is the ultimate happiness

May you enjoy the Blessings of the Noble Triple Gem and the Protection of the Devas.

Thank you.

(Commemorative lecture by A. T. Ariyaratne at the Ninth Award Ceremony of the niwano Peace Prize 12.05.1992 in Tokyo)

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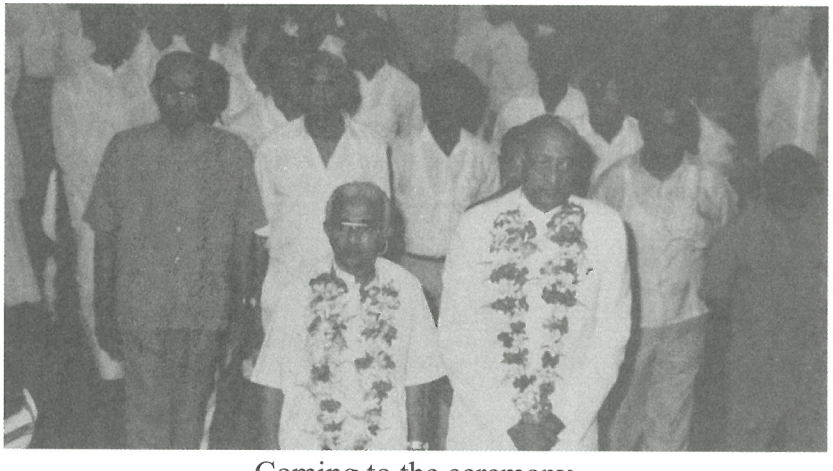
The World is One Family for The Wise Person The Welcome Ceremony after Receiving the Peace Prize.

I would like to convey my gratitude to the executive committee for organizing a ceremony to welcome me after receiving the Niwano Peace Price. I deeply admire your presence here.

Hospitality received by our own people in our own motherland is greater than receiving it elsewhere.

Having received 7 international awards so far, I felt the receiving of Niwano Peace Prize on the 12th in Japan was a psychological phenomenon which strengthened my relations with the international community. The obligations towards one's family, organization and the country should not be narrow and limited. Getting the mind out of

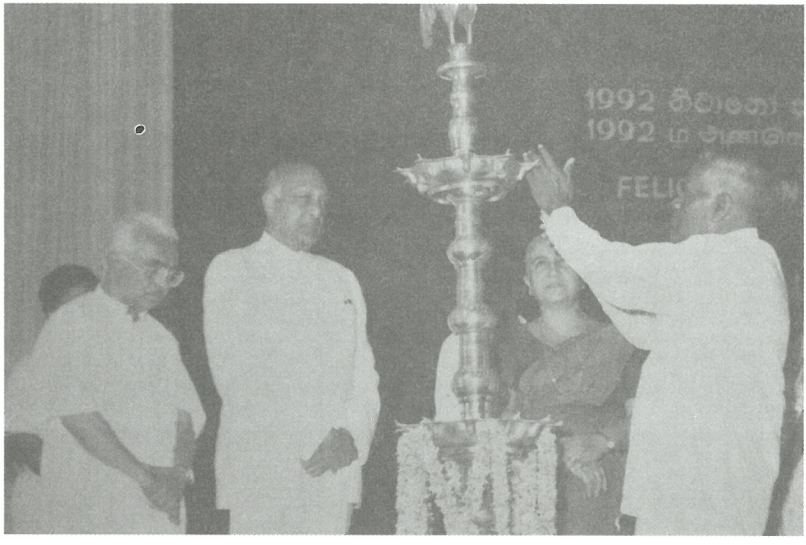


Coming to the ceremony

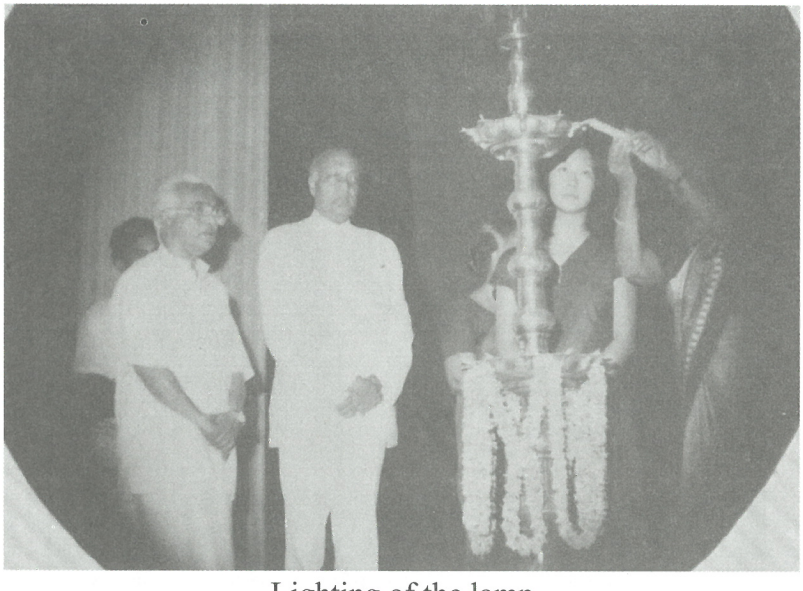
the box will pave the way for a more meaningful bond within loved ones.

vice chairman Mrs. Sitha Rajasooriya ushering
Hon prime ministress Mrs. Srimawo Bandaranayake

Sri Ramakrishna Bajaj speaking with prime minister



Lighting of the lamp



Lighting of the lamp

As a nine year old child I failed to comprehend as to why my father refused black market earnings. Manipulating the shortage of consumer goods at the beginning of World War ll many earned lot of money. My father refused to do so saying it was wrong and unworthy.

When my parents advised that I should donate every cent received with my first international award Ramon Magsaysay, I was matured enough to understand the value of it. One must gain happiness only by what you do, not by what you gain out of it. This is a teaching found in Bhagavath Geetha.

My father knew that I would never hunt for money or power, bearing which he passed away as a happy man. Although we were not a wealthy family in the material sense, I am deeply indebted to my parents who always encouraged me to follow the unselfish charitable path in life.

My mother passed away at the age of 92 in an era in which the then government had suppressed our practice of affectionately serving people, living on core values. Her salvation from the psychological trauma we still undergo is a relief for us. Having taught us to learn and live the life of a gentleman, she departed to enjoy divine life.

When you suffer, you are instigated to find yourself. When you are in search of yourself, you realize the nature of others and the world.

Without suffering, you cannot find cause. Once you find cause, you realize it can be eliminated, and that there is a path for that. This is what the Lord Buddha taught.

As a true follower of the Buddha, I strive to gain spiritual strength, within the cause of non-violence, to face perjury, fallacy and violence.

The psychical weaponry, truth and non-violence, used by Mahathma Gandhi in the struggle for Indian independence rendered relief and guidance for us in that difficult situation.

In every word we speak and every word we write there is enormous psychic energy within. We should be careful not to fill them with hate and craving, else we will only become cultivators of not only hate and craving, but also foolishness. It was with these righteous aspirations we successfully faced all the troubles for the past three-and-a-half years.

We had the opportunity of meeting, and being inquired by many gentlemen from police, labour department and commissions investigating into NGO activities.

Because of the conduct of government-controlled media we received immense sympathy and attention from all sections of people. In a context filled with fear, uncertainty, and sometimes insanity the only way we could serve the people of 8,600 villages in Sri Lanka was by cultivating spiritual contentment of our personality.

I made sure to get everybody involved in my daily meditation. "Love your enemies, bless those that curse you, do good to those that hate you, and pray for those who speak evil about you, and persecute you" These words spoken by Jesus flowed often into my mind.

24 Pages

Daily News

Late City ★

The English Daily with the largest circulation in Sri Lanka

MONDAY, JUNE 14, 1982. PRICE Rs. 1/75

Ariyaratne, the man who built Sarvodaya

M.W.KARUNANANDA

Daily News, Monday, June 14, 1982

President to congratulate Sarvodaya leader

スリランカに報道の自由を

指導者・アリヤラトネ氏に聞く

中傷記事の載った政府系新聞を掲げ、「スリランカに報道の自由を」と訴えるアリヤラトネさん＝京都市下京区のホテルで5月13日

サルボダヤ運動に圧力

第三世界での草の根の開発運動として世界のNGO（非政府組織）から高く評価されているスリランカのサルボダヤ運動。その指導者のアリヤラトネ会長さんが庭野平和賞受賞のため来日した。受賞講演やインタビューのなかで、政府から圧力を受けていることを明らかにしてNGO関係者を驚かせた。いったい、何が起こっているのか。日本での講演、インタビューから抜き書きしてみた。

（社会部編集委員・佐伯通男）

〈いつごろから、どんな圧力が〉

三年半ほど前にプレマダサ大統領になってからだ。国営のテレビ・ラジオ、政府系新聞による私への中傷がひどい。たとえば、五月十二日付の政府系新聞は、私が今回受賞した庭野平和賞の賞金二千万円のうち千二百万円を自己流用した、とデタラメを一面で報じている。私や家族を殺すという脅迫もある。サルボダヤの土地が不正なやり方で没収されるようになることも防げないという姿勢をとってきた。政府はおおむね協力的で、ジャヤワルデネ前大統領時代は非常によい関係だった。

〈政府との関係は良好とされてきたはずなのに、なぜ私を攻撃するのか、いまだにわからないが、おそらく、恐怖感、不安感が政府とNGOの間に広がっているからだろう。政策批判に出るのではないか、大統領候補として政権奪取を狙っているのではないか、といったような。私に政治的な野心はなく、政党や権力政治にかかわるつもりはない。

〈スリランカの現状は〉

スリランカの人口は千六百七十万人。その四割に当たる最貧困層は一九七三年には国民総所得の二割弱を得ていたが、八七年には一割に。現在、国民の六五％が貧困ライン以下で政府支給の食券で暮らし、貧富の差が拡大している。植民地支配者から受け継いだ政治経済システムは、旧ソ連同様、行き詰まっている。

軍と政治権力は少数者が握り、人々は民主的な自由を失い、基本的人権も侵害されている。シンハラ人とタミル人の民族対立による内戦、テロリズム、村落間の暴力事件、環境汚染が起こり、軍、警察が強化されている。こんなかで、民族的、宗教的に一方にくみすることなく、民衆の社会参加による開発運動を進めていくのは非常に難しい。

〈今後の運動は〉

運動を進めている。七月には、紛争地域をひと月かけて回り、民衆レベルで和解への話し合いを進めたい。

〈日本が協力できることは〉

第一に、報道・表現の自由の国復に力を貸してほしい。スリランカのメディアはごく少数の勇気ある新聞を除いて、政府のいいなりだ。二つ目は基本的な人権の順守要求への協力を。一九八九年から一年間で七万人が逮捕され、行方不明になっている。非常事態の名の下に裁判を受ける権利が踏みにじられている。三つ目はダムや発電所などの援助の中止。利益が国民に行き渡っておらず、多くの抗争や腐敗をうみ、環境破壊をもたらすだけだ。

最近、南部で火力発電所や超高級ホテル建設計画が持ち上がったが、私たちは反対した。建設でため池が壊され、仏教の聖域がおかされ、地域文化の破壊にもつながるからだ。援助はため池の修理など小規模なものを対象にしてほしい。これこそ貧しい人々の自立にもつながる。日本の皆さんとの連帯を強めたい。

庭野平和賞は励み

加えない。いま、カナダ、オランダ、英国の援助を受け、紛争地域で緊急援助を行っているのは非常に難しい。

〈運動は年々拡大し、各国のNGOの支援を受けているが、予算が絶対的に不足している。保育園、身体・精神障害者、麻薬患者、アルコール依存症、内戦被害者などの救済にたちむかわなければならない。我々の役目はますます大きくなっている。

シンハラ、タミル間の紛争はイスラム教徒をも巻き込み、罪のないお人が死んでいる。これに対する政府の政策は警察、軍隊を強化するだけ。政府はプータッチという傾向がみられる。

我々は〈和解調停の〉チャンスを与えて〉と政府に訴えている。この問題は民衆で解決できる。幸い、サルボダヤに対して、軍隊もタミル人過激派〈タミル・イーラム解放のトラ〉（LTTE）もまったく敵意を

Receiving Niwano Peace Prize at this stage emboldened our employees in every rank. It was really an affirmation of my faith in the cardinal virtues in those who are here, and our friends all over the world.

The money I received for every reward was my personal property. I reiterate in front of venerable Maha Sanga, clergy of other religions and this honourable assembly that not even a cent out of that money was not and will not be spent for the benefit of me or my family.

I and my family have enough legal means to live a minimalistic way of life. I refuse both money and power hunger. We in Sarvodaya collectively involve in achievement of the try-fold objective of welfare of society, development and the education of people in the direction of making changes in the core of society towards non-violence.

We have lot to learn from the people of Japan. I would like to share some experience gained in Japan for the past three weeks and earlier. We can go a long way forward with Japan in the direction of development. Japan has many attractive aspects. Their materialist foundation is perfect. What a Sri Lankan whose heart is agitated seen the suffering of his people with poor social welfare will first see in Japan is how they work together to preserve the continuity of welfare for people.

I believe the secret for peace in Japan is the well-established welfare system equally enjoyed by all classes of people, and which allows the people to enjoy the returns of development. After the World War ll they placed their country's well-being above selfishness.

It seems Japan has embraced the socio-economic philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi. Mahatma Gandhi created the word Sarvodaya by combining two words "Sarva" which means everyone, and "Udawa" which means well-being.

Many countries seems to govern their country quite contrary to this by suppressing the majority.

Countries like United States of America have provided for the well-being of the majority of its people, but the recent incidents in Los Angeles indicated a missing element. The Black minority was isolated from the majority by rightist policies.

Those who live wealthy lives favoring rightist policies. They say it is not their responsibility to ward off poverty from minority. They forget that the society is a relatively interdependent whole. We all are like a lotus: Although separated above water, underneath we all are connected together. The aftermath of the apartheid riots in Los Angeles was that the people of America seem determined to vote for a leadership with a new vision to correct mistakes.

It is a pity, on the other hand, to see leaders acting in the same old ways without ever trying to figure out the cause of JVP and LTTE riots. They talk much about working together, but when you consider the annoying agonies faced by Sarvodaya and others who worked for the benefit of others, you see how impractical it is.

Japan gained success by laying an economic and social development policy which substantiated the welfare of the all-people-policy, within

the borders of their country. Today, third world countries consider Japan as the wealthiest source for foreign aid and investments.

Even though so wealthy, Japan faces many problems. Trade wars with other industrialized nations is one of the major problems Japan faces. Other wealthy, industrialized countries are trying to compel Japan toward increased imports by encouraging increased consumption. Their aim is to solve the problem of trade balance. But it does not solve the problem of poverty in the third world. Further, this will not provide a positive answer in a situation where the degree of over consumption in Japan has come to critical level.

In this moment world leaders are gathering in Rio de Janeiro for The Earth summit which is the United Nations Conference on Environments and Development.

The main issues discussed here are issues of northern wealth and southern poverty. The best solution in agreement with all environment friendly and peace loving communities is changing the destructive luxury way of life of northern rich countries and strengthening of democracy in southern counties.

If I were to say this in a more meaningful way, as, all religions, particularly Buddhism reveals, you will never gain complete satisfaction in a lifestyle based on overconsumption and craving. Until this is changed, Japan and Other European countries will not do much in their efforts to eliminate poverty.

First of all our countries should create a suitable environment to receive such aid. If their donations end up in bank accounts of corrupt politicians and their allies, or they are used for unnecessary gigantic

projects, Japan and other countries decline to increase their donations. Therefore it is time for us to create more positive procedures.

We Sri Lankans, starting from here, can assist Japan and other wealthy countries to eliminate world poverty. Japan has established everyone's welfare within the borders of their country. It is time for them to look outside.

Our aim should be to build a Sarvodaya society enriched with spiritual values, in Sri Lanka. If we become successful, it will encourage Japan and other wealthy nations to search and help others. To dedicate their resources to serve the welfare of people outside of the borders of their countries should be the objective all rich counties. Only such objective will pave the way for the salvation of people of the whole world from poverty.

"The whole world is one family for intellectual" is a Hindu teaching. The policies and morals aimed at establishing a Sarvodaya Society in Japan and Sri Lanka, for the benefit of all, ought to be implemented first by us ourselves. What Sarvodaya Society was doing for the past 34 years, and what we will be doing for the rest of our lives will be to work for this purpose.

I thank with grave politeness and gratitude for the presence of honourable Sri Ramakrishna Bajaj. If we were to talk about a great Baharatha Putra living with the values of Mahatma Gandhi of India, he is none other than Hon Sri Ramakrishna Bajaj.

His great father Sri Jamnalal Bajaj was a distinctive person brought up under the direct guardianship of Mahatma Gandhi. He was also called the Labourer of Mahatma Gandhi."

His senior Brother Hon Kamalnayan Bajaj's presence in Sri Lanka for education, even for a short while, was an honour endowed to us. I had the honour of doing a series of Kamalnayan Bajaj memorial lectures at the Gujarat Scientific Academy in Ahamdabath.

Sri Ramakrishna Bajaj, who is dedicated to implementing Mahatma Gandhi's Social Guardianship, is the oldest of a highly successful business family. Practicing highest business ethics, providing for the welfare of all his employees, involving largely in development activities aimed at eliminating poverty, and guiding both governmental and voluntary organizations. Hon Sri Ramakrishna Bajaj with his dedication towards a non-violence social revolution is an energizing force. He is a strictly honourable person.

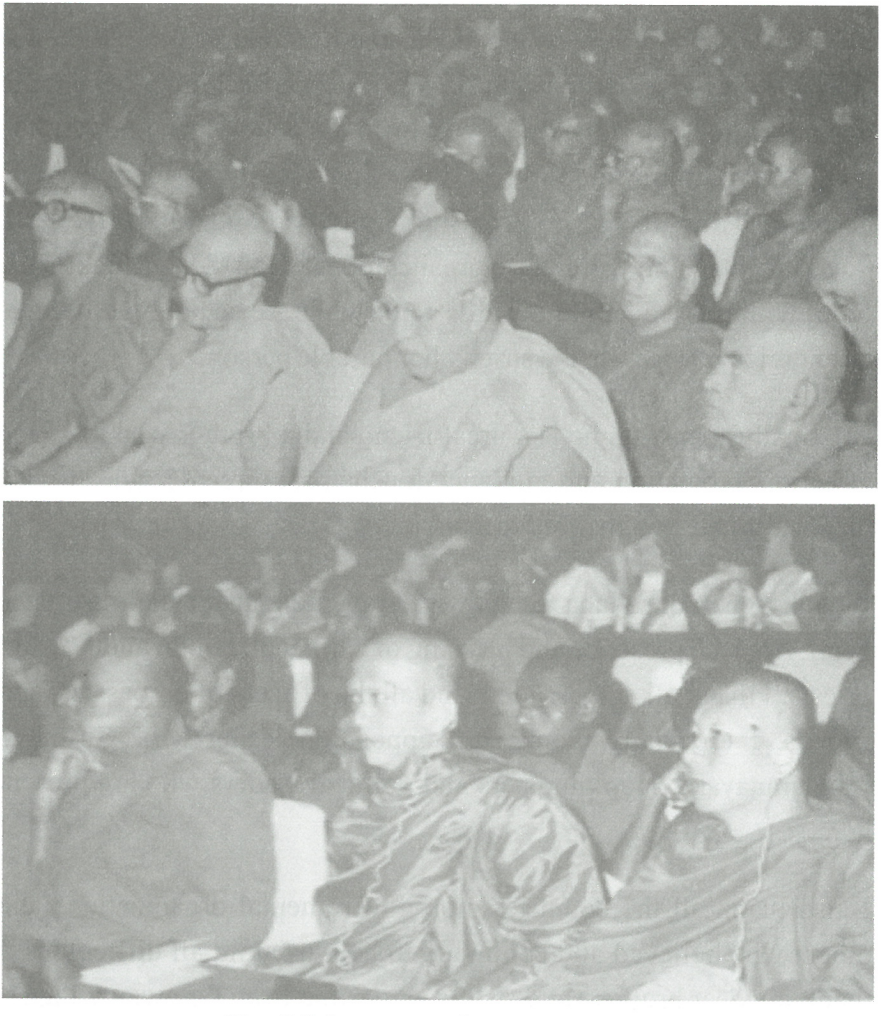
Personally speaking, he is a great friend and a brother who gave me affection, protection and guidance for the past three decades. I wish him health and wealth to serve mankind.

I thank Venerable Maha Sanga with grave honour for their presence here. Also the presence and blessing of Christian, Hindu and Muslim priests. I thank all ambassadors and all the officers of embassies, and friends. I especially thank Hon opposition leader Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranayake, Hon ministers and political leaders who are present here.

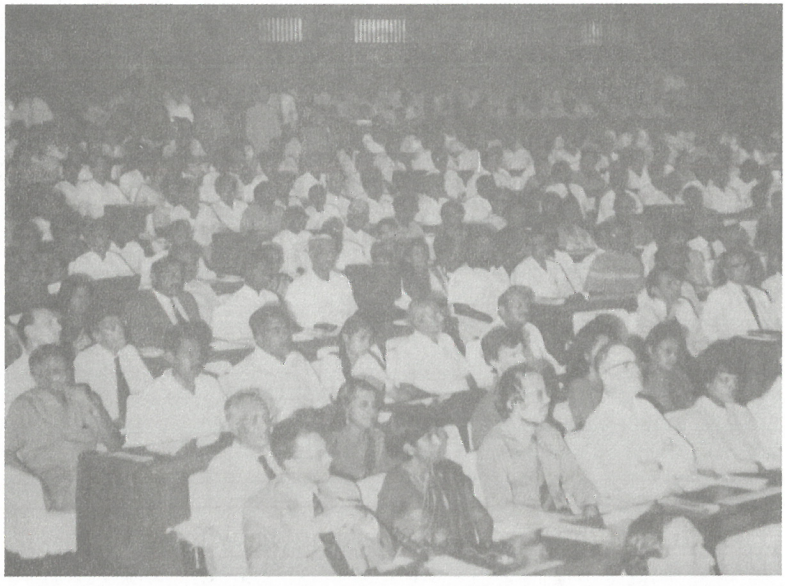
I also thank all the countries, non-governmental organizations and others who believed and continued to help us amid all difficulties. I thank my dear brothers and sisters who came from far away villages,

and I hereby promise to continue working for the benefit of your welfare and freedom until the end of my life.

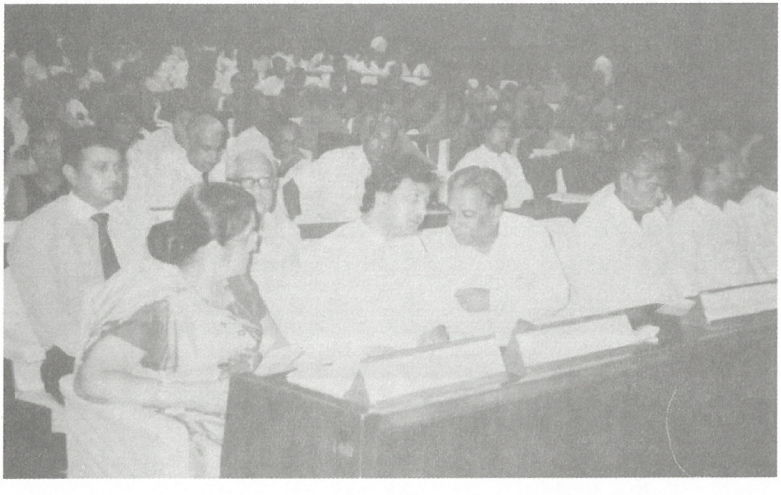
May the Triple Gem Bless You!



Ven Mahasanga who were present

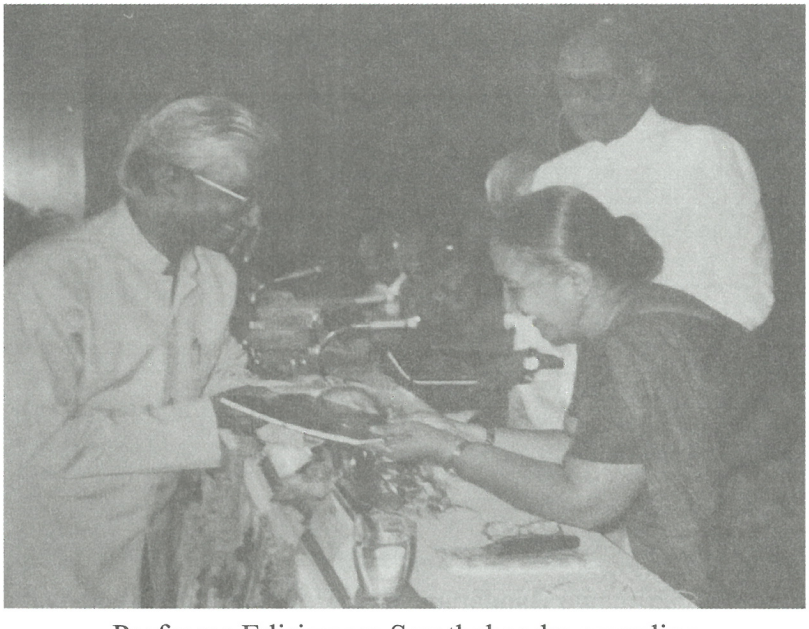


Some of the Guests of Honour



Hon Mrs. Sirimawo Bandaranayake, Hon. Gamini Dissanayake, Lalith Athulathmudali, Dinesh Gunawardene and others present

Mr. Sarath Hewagama awarding me with a plaque



Professor Ediriweera Sarathchandra awarding
a plaque to Mrs. Neetha Ariyaratne

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A Beacon of Light Amidst Encircling Gloom

Shri Ramkrishna Bajaj

I feel greatly honoured by your invitation to be the Chief Guest on this happy occasion. I have considerably reduced my public activities on medical advice in recent months. But, I could not resist the temptation of accepting the invitation extended by your Vice-President Mr. Mahawatte, because of the bond of friendship that exists between Dr. Ariyaratne and myself. I join in the felicitations offered to Dr. Ariyaratne and would like to assure him and all of you that I also bring with me the felicitations of your fraternity in India in the voluntary sector.

The achievements of Dr. Ariyaratne are known to all of us for a very long time and have received international recognition. In 1990, he received the Jamnalal Bajaj International Award for which we felicitated him in India. This year again, We have assembled here to pay our respects amd tributes to him on receiving the coveted Niwano Peace Prize. Through the Niwano Peace Prize, his contribution to peace and human brotherhood has once again been highlighted. I am glad that this dimension of peace and non-violence which Ari gave to his work in recent years has been recognised and he has joined the illustrious ranks of Niwano Laureates like Dr. Homer Jack, Dr. Hildegard Goss-Mayr and Prof. Norman Cousins. I would like to take this opportunity to compliment the Niwano Peace Foundation for choosing such an eminently deserving person for this high honour. I am sure there are many more laurels to come for Dr. Ariyaratne and we should be ready for more felicitation functions in the future.

This occasion revives my memories of the connections which our family has with Sri Lanka. My elder brother, Kamalnayanji, in his younger days wanted to have better familiarity with the English language because the Ashram life in Wardha did not provide it. Father Jamnalalji consulted Gandhiji. Any other person would have suggested that Kamalnayanji should go to England, which was also naturally Kamalnayanji's wish. But Bapuji was different. He advised that Kamalnayanji should first undergo a year of schooling in Sri Lanka. Therefore, my brother came here to study under the tutelage of Bernard Aluwihare and stayed with him for a year. As you all know, Aluwihare was an ardent follower of Gandhiji.

We are happy to find that the seeds of Gandhian thought Shri Aluwihare had sown, have now borne fruit in the form of the work being done by the Sarvodaya movement.

The relations between Sri Lanka and India are of a deep spiritual nature. This is particularly seen in the spread of Budhdhism here. The essential principles on which Budhdhism was founded, as we all know, are love, compassion and non-violence. Today, these values have acquired immense significance in view of the present threat to world peace. I am sure, with a large section of its citizens being followers of the Lord Buddha, Sri Lanka can show the way to the world - the way of peaceful co-existence. This was basic idea behind the prinples of panchsheel enunciated by our late Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru along with your late Prime Minister Mr. Bandaranaike. To be able to visit your country, therefore, makes me feel excited in view of our mutual relationship and the sense of shared destiny.

When I received the news of the Niwano Peace Prize being conferred on Ari, I was naturally delighted, But was not surprised. Who else would have deserved this honour? He stands tall among the leading peace workers and missionaries of constructive movement all over the world. he has uncommon qualities of head and heart which are reflected in his achievements. What appeals to me most is his humility, which is the hallmark of greatness. He has endeared himself to everyone, from close colleagues down to the grassroot workers by his simplicity and desire to take every one along with him in his work. It is therefore natural that Dr. Ariyartne has became dear Ari to all in the Sarvodaya Movement not only in Sri Lanka, But also in India where he has innumerable close friends and admirers. He is also connected with the activities of different institutions in India like the Gujarat Vidyapith, founded by Mahatma Gandhi, in Ahmedabad and the Asian Institute of Rural Development in Bangalore.

Though Dr. Ariyaratne has been the pioneer of the Sarvodaya Shramadan Movement in Sri Lanka, we in India had adopted a strategy of people's participation way back in the first Five Year Plan itself. The Plan had envisaged community Development Programme, which was inaugurated on Gandhiji's birthday, 2nd October, in 1952. The underlying idea was that a labour surplus economy like India should put this important resource to maximum use for building infrastructure of development through voluntary efforts. If everything had gone as per expectations of the planning commission, much could have been achieved at minimum cost in terms of development in rural areas. However, subsequently, the strategy of overall development took a statist turn and the Community Development Programme lost its original impetus.

On this background, it is to the credit of Ari and his colleagues that the Sarvodaya Shramadan Movement took deep roots in Sri Lanka. What has impressed me has been the clarity with which the movement was conceived, the meticulousness with which the various development programs were prepared, and the consciousness of people aroused for effecting change.

Of greatest importance in any development strategy in a less developed economy is the motivation of the people. It is essential that people feel the need for its achievement. If people are to believe you, you must enjoy their credibility. Dr. Ariyaratne has shown awareness of this factor and engaged himself in the task of winning over people's minds and hearts. For this to come about, I am sure, his total involvement as also his adherence to the Gandhian Principles of love, truth, peace and non-violence have contributed greatly. It is therefore no wonder that the Sarvodaya Movement in Sri Lanka has spread far and wide having more that three thousand full-time workers, covering more than 8000 villages, practically one third of the country.

Happily, communities outside Sri Lanka have also become aware of what has been started here. I am glad that Ari has taken it upon himself the task of spreading the word about Sarvodaya Movement in diffrent parts of the world. His deep scholastic understanding and his communicative skills have emabled him to write profusely in journals which he had started and also in reputed magazines outside Sri Lanka.

I see in Ari's work an inspiration taken from Schumacher who thought of "Economics as if people mattered". No wonder, therefore, Ari made people and their felt-needs the focal point of his efforts. Before he asked people to get themselves involved in the process of social and

economic reconstruction, he gave up the comfortable and rather secluded career of a teacher. He has drawn spiritual inspiration from the Buddha's teachings and I feel proud that the young mind of Dr. Ariyaratne was inspired by the thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi, Vinoba Bhave and Jayaprakash Narayan.

Friends, I now wish to share with you a few thoughts on the world we are living in and our own humble efforts to understand it and find out some solution to its problems. Earlier, I referred to the threat to world peace. Naturally, you may ask "from whom" well, it is not from any particular country or community of people. The threat is from the widespread prevalence of poverty in the world and senseless use of science and technology. There is no doubt that science and technology have contributed greatly to the betterment of human life. The world has become a global village as a result of modern communications and information technology. There is explosion of knowledge and information which could now be shared by people of all countries, whether it originates in their country or not. Economic progress has also been made possible by the increase in productivity. However, man seems to have lost the sense of direction, his sense of proportion and discretion in general, while bringing about scientific and technological progress. Rapid depletion of natural resources, threat to environment, destruction of stable social and economic structures, increase in violence, and a general alienation of man are there for everyone to see. In this process, many finer aspects of life and values appear to be fast declining. Humanity constantly lives in danger of a nuclear holocaust. Besides, there is widespread inequality. Side by side of affluence devoid of social commitment or accountability, we also have millions of people starving through lack of even the basic necessities of life.

It was in this context that Mahatma Gandhi wanted the pursuit of science and technology to be tempered by spiritual objectives as, without spiritual moorings, they easily lend themselves to be harnessed for destructive ends. Acharya Vinoba Bhave had gone one step further. He described the present situation in the form of a mathematical formula. He said that:

Science + Spirituality = Sarvodaya

Science - Spirituality = Sarvanash

or complete destruction. We must duly recongnize the grave implications of this view.

It has therefore become urgent and imperative to blend science with spirituality. Actually, the object of both is identical, i.e. to unravel the mysteries of human life and to seek the true meaning of human existence. The methods followed by them, however, are different. Science goes via the path of observation and experiment while spiritual efforts take recourse to meditation and intuition. But, it is significant that the conclusions reached by some of the recent scientific studies show a marked resemblance to the knowledge attained by spiritual seekers. This encouraged some of us in India to set up an institution to attempt a synthesis between science and spirituality. Our Jamnalal Bajaj Foundation and the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan have come together to establish the Gandhi Centre of Science and Human Values at Bangalore to pursue this effort. The project, incidentally, is in commemoration of my father Jamnalaji's Birth Centenary.

I am happy to tell you that these humble efforts have received the blessings of His Holiness Pope John Paul II recently when I had the good fortune of having a personal audience with him in Rome.

Many of you may be aware about the close relationship that father had with Gandhiji. In fact he was regarded Gandhiji's fifth son. Because of him, Gandhiji came to live in Wardha and we all in the family had the rare privilege of living in close association with Gandhiji. As a result of what we learnt under Gandhiji and Vinobaji, it is our conviction that Gandhiji's teachings alone will enable mankind to live in peace, harmony and spiritual and material contentment. From this point of view, we decided to propagate Gandhian thought in a systematic manner and, as part of father's Birth Centenary Programmes, we have set up the Institute of Gandhian Studies in Wardha for the study, research and propagation of Gandhian thought. The Institute holds regular academic courses for social workers, trade unionists, women, youth and person engaged in every other type of constructive work. Perhaps, your organization may also like to take the benefit and send its grassroot workers to Wardha for this training.

One of the basic characteristics of Gandhiji's teachings was his emphasis on voluntary action which alone make a citizen self-reliant. He believed that Government is the best which governs the least. Unfortunately, under the influence of the twin ideologies of socialism and welfare State, which held such a universal sway until few years ago, the people came increasingly to depend on government for everything and, as a result, more and more power came to be concentrated in the government bureaucracy leading to widespread prevalence of inefficiency, waste and corruption in public life.

Fortunately, the collapse of the communist experiment in Europe has brought home to all that excessive reliance on the State for individual and social progress is counter-productive. As a result, the emerging trend now is towards encouraging individual or voluntary effort and initiative in different fields of national endeavour. After many decades of the influence of statist ideologies, the world is now turning to voluntarism - which was the essence of Gandhi's thought.

Being Gandhian in his inspiration and outlook, Dr. Ariyaratne is naturally a firm believer in voluntarism. Whatever may be the good intentions of any Government, because the bureaucracy lacks the requisite motivation and approach, it is not able to deliver the goods in the desired manner, especially in the field of social welfare and economic development. This has been the experience all over the world. Ultimately it is people's own efforts that matter. Fortunately, the growing realisation of the importance of the people's involvement in the development process is inducing a change in the relationship between governments and voluntary agencies, it is now turning from that of confrontation to one of cooperation. In this direction also, favourable winds are blowing in India. Our Government has not only adopted a policy of deregulation and greater liberalisation, but has also decided to minimize the government's role in the social and economic fields and consciously encourage voluntary agencies to participate in the development process. For example, in the 8th Five Year Plan, 51% of the resources have been allotted to the private sector and the government has stepped up the allocation for rural development in this year's national budget.

Our Prime Minister has also publicly announced the government's willingness to withdraw the government bureaucracy from various welfare and development programmes, entrust their execution to local voluntary agencies and channelise the funds earmarked for these programmes through them. This decision is not based on any theoretical consideration, but is a progmatic one. It has been found that the programmes implemented with people's participation became most cost-efficient. For example, it is estimated that in the case of social welfare schemes executed through the bureaucratic machinery, only 20% of the funds reach the targeted beneficiaries while the balance 80% is partly consumed leakages.

Thanks to the Gandhian tradition of voluntary action, we have, in India, innumerable voluntary organization manned by dedicated workers. The task is now to bring together these voluntary agencies, the government, the corporate business sector and social service organization like Rotary and Lions Club, etc, and coordinate their efforts in a sustained and systematic manner. For this purpose, we had organized last year an International Conference on Corporate Philanthropy in which efforts were made to understand the new situation and also take some concrete steps to strengthen the nexus between Government, business and voluntary agencies. A National Foundation for India has also been set up recently with this object in mind to work on an ongoing basis.

In this connection, I would like to refer to yet another significant voluntary effort being made in India under the auspices of the Hunger project. The Hunger project is an international voluntary movement dedicated to the goal of ending world hunger by the end of this century. The need for mounting organized efforts for this purpose is only too

obvious. According to an estimate, over one billion people all over the world are hungry, 13 to 18 million people die of hunger and hunger-related causes every year and thirty thousand die every day. In India, the Hunger Project, apart from promoting awareness of the problem, concentrates on empowering voluntary action to fight hunger. In the past few years, it had been endeavouring to support the work of some of the existing voluntary agencies working in such different fields as development, medical care, nutrition, family planning, and literacy etc. Two years ago, after detailed discussions with the Planning commission, a programme was jointly evolved for enlisting the participation of voluntary organisations in the implementation of the government's welfare and development activities in specific areas. Accordingly, the State Councils have been set up in Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and West Bengal. I am personally associated with the Maharashtra council where our experience has been encouraging. The Council comprises representatives of (i) Voluntary Agencies (ii) Academicians, (iii) Social Service Organisations (iv) Business as well as (v) Secretaries of 4 concerned State Government departments as its members. The State Government has furnished the Council a list of 40 different development schemes the execution of which it is willing to entrust to voluntary agencies approved by the Council and also give them necessary funds for the purpose. We have already approved about 25 voluntary organisations and another 25 are in the pipeline.

As a member of the Global Board of Directors of the World hunger project, along with Dr. M. S. Swaminathan, I wish to tell you, on personal experience, that we have thus been able to take effective steps to bring all the concerned parties together not only for an across-

the -table dialogue; but also for concrete action. I hope my friend Ari and all of you may find that these efforts are in tune with your thinking and strategy.

Friends, the world is thus coming to realise that Mahatma Gandhi is not only very relevant in the present Information Age, but there is also no alternative but to follow the path shown by him. The recent experience of the people in China, the Philippines, Burma, South Africa and the former Soviet Union has proved the effectiveness of the method of peaceful non-violet resistance advocated by Gandhiji. His teachings as well as techniques of action have thun stood the test of time, when other socalled scientific ideologies have crumbled under the weigh of their own contradictions. It is therefore no wonder that we find the interest growing in Gandhiji's life and thought among the people - especially the younger generations - all over the world. And for them the work being carried on by dedicated persons like Dr. Ariyartne, who is one of the pillars of the international Sarvodaya movement, serves as a ray of light and hope in the surrounding gloom.

I once again express my profound happiness at the honour conferred on Dr. Ariyaratne which is really an acknowledgment of the significance of his vision and contribution. I offer him my best wishes for a continuing sense of fulfilment and many more years of health and happiness as well as an active and purposeful life.

Thank You.

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Vishva Nikethan International Peace Home and Meditation Centre

My utmost desire was to get with out a salary for two years leave from Nalanda College and spread the message of Sarvodaya in all institutes island-wide. As it became a success, on 1st of January 1972, I officially submitted my resignation to the Ministry of Education. However, from that moment I did not have any means of income from Sarvodaya or otherwise. Accordingly, from time to time, I had to undertake special assignments from the United Nations, World Bank or similar international organizations in order to earn an income.

World Bank offered me a special position in the council they established for the restoration of war-ridden Uganda. World Bank paid me a considerable amount for a three-month service. After several days of receiving the money, a land owner came to me and implored me to buy his two-and-a-half acre land. So I bought the land under the name of Sarvodaya. After I donated several 10 perch plots to our long term employees, the rest remained untouched.

Even though the network of Sarvodaya was successfully delivering various community services for the economic welfare, an urge was growing in me to deliver a suitable spiritual service aimed at universally attained psychic peace and welfare by spiritual development of National community and the visitors of international community who are tired of pursuing material wealth.

I used to go to this land on free occasions and do imaginary planning to build the meditation centre. One day when I was on the land, I felt

someone tapping me on the shoulders. I turned to see my American friend and great benefactress Mrs. Jacelyn Beanett.

My answer to her question "what are you doing standing here" was that I was doing mental planning on the meditation centre I want to build on the land.

She asked what will have to be done first in order to build it.

I said we will have to first do the earth filling which will cost about one million Rupees.

Saying "I will pay for that", with a smile on her face, she opened her hand bag and placed a cheque on my hand drawn to the value of one million Rupees. The earth filling was started in two days.

Meanwhile I got a building plan for the meditation centre done by a Canadian architect. But as I understood it would cost a large sum, I got an alternative plan done by architect Chandana Edisooriya. Then I warded the building contract to my cousin contractor Mr. L H Piyasena, having thoroughly explained the importance, vision, and the spiritual value of the mission of this project.

I formed the "A. T. Ariyaratne Charity Trust" with all the money I received for the 1992 Niwano Peace Prize in Japan. We signed the deed prepared by attorney Mrs. B. A. P. M. Darmasiri on 24th December 1994. I was the chairman of it. Mrs. Neetha Dammachari Ariyaratne, Mrs. Samya Charika Ariyaratne, Dr. Vinya Shanthidas Ariyaratne, Mr. Jeewan Dammika Ariyaratne, Miss Sadeewa Samadeepa Ariyaratne, Mr. Diyath Samantha Ariyaratne, Miss

Nimna Hayanthi Ariyaratne, Dr. Upali Marasinha, Mrs. Hasanthi Ariyaratne Iddamalgoda, Attorney Walter Peiris and Mr. Dayananda Muthukumarana were the members of the trust.

In the meantime as I received the 1996 Mahatma Gandhi Peace Prize, I could credit the entirety of the money received for the prize to the trust.

I would like to thank everyone who not only helped build this but also helped to make it a success thus far. We always recall and admire the help from Ven Kuang Hsin the chairman of Taiwan Buddhist Association and Dharma Chakra Association. At first Ven Kuang Hsin donated nearly 10 million Rupees, and then when the construction work was halted due to lack of funds Ven Kuang generously donated another 200,000 US Dollars. Miss Emi Yoshida from Japan holds a special position in our hearts. She helped us not only financially but also by affording the services of Mr. Nobuo Shirasuna. Mrs. Jaqueline Bennet from America, Mrs. Thoimiko Iwasaki from Japan, Chairman of Taiwan Buddhist Association, Ven. G Asami of Nipon Miyoji monastery of Ampara, Fukouka Genkai of Lions Club are the other benefactors who helped us financially.

Although we had to hold the construction in several occasions due to lack of funds, L. H. Piyasena and Company continued the work. They continued the construction though we were indebted to them, and the indebtedness lasted until the year 2006. On behalf of immeasurable services rendered to the world by Visva Niketana and as a merit for his late wife and parents, Mr. L. H. Piyasena deducted 300,000 Rupees out of the 800,000 Rupees that the A. T. Ariyaratne Trust Fund owed to him.

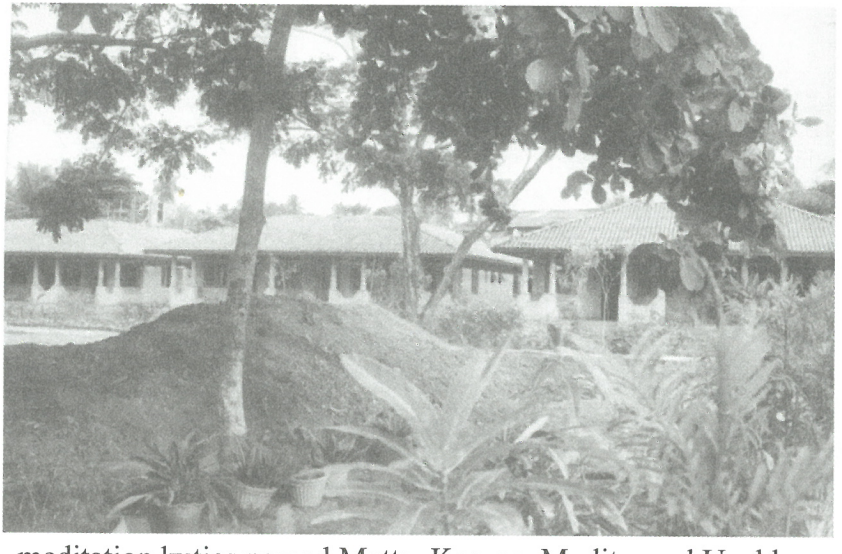
I invited a famous landscape architect of Sri Lanka to landscape the garden. He quoted one million for the job, and I decided to do it myself. Japanese landscape architect Sirasuna showed three areas suitable for ponds. He especially included the small mountain range at the back to my plan. He was brought to Sri Lanka by Mrs. Emi Yoshida.

Garden of Vishva Nikethana

Many came from many Sarvodaya villages and helped by shramadana.

In my opinion, Vishwa Niketan is a place where one can feel alive in an instant, touching the beauty of nature and its charming tranquility, and enjoy peace and happiness within. It is a home of peace.

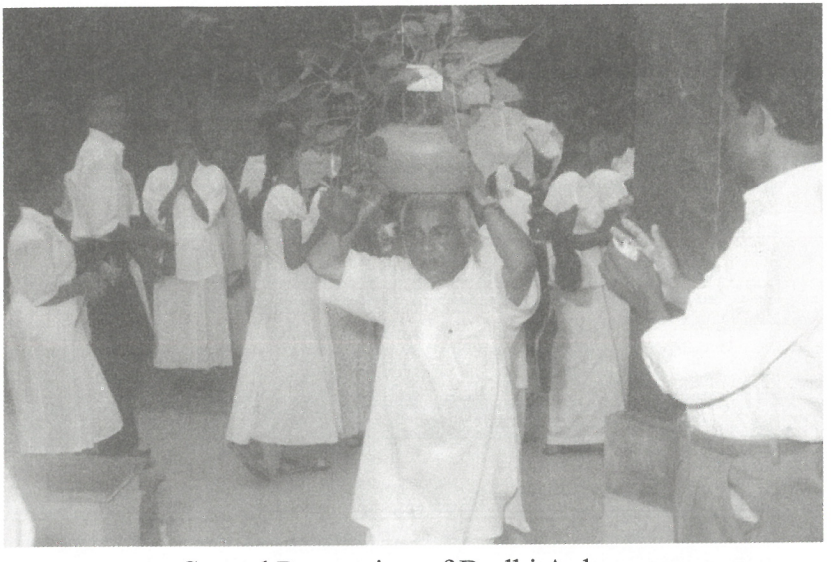
Anybody can visit the Vishwa Nikethana for meditation. There are various attractive spaces indoors and outdoors for meditating individually or collectively, spiritual seminars, training programs and peace forums. It also consists of a lotus pond, sand paths for stroll meditation, verandahs under the shadow of clusters of trees and separate meditation centres with all facilities named Metta, Karuna, Mudita, and Upekka all in a salubrious milieu. On the northern section you will find a mini forest.



meditation kuties named Metta, Karuna, Mudita, and Upekka

I planned to obtain a Bodhi plant of the sort of found in the Sri Maha Bodhi of Anuradhapura and implant it here. I sought assistance for the task from Ven Mapalagama Vipulasara who was an influential Buddhist prelate in Sri Lanka. He personally went to Anuradhapura, obtained a seed, brought it back to Vishwa Niketana in a procession, and planted it in a spot specified by him. Ven. Maplagema also

installed a special Samadi Buddha Statue there. To make the place spiritually powerful I planted 28 Bodhi trees, associated with the 28 Buddhas, found from various parts of Sri Lanka. I planted all 28 trees with my own two hands. All the aged trees in Viswa Nikethana are those planted by me in those days.



Sacred Procession of Bodhi Ankura

The director of the National Museum was special among the scholars who assisted us in the planning and implementation of the museum, library and the archive. Raman Magsaysay foundation contributed financially for this. In the museum you will find details about all the international and inland awards I received and the history and the progress of Sarvodaya. The library consists of a large number of books on subjects such as peace, meditation and conflict-solving.

Viswa Nikethana resembles a living treasury of knowledge set in a serene ambience of natural beauty waiting to enlighten mankind with wisdom.

On the 28th of February 1999 "Vishwa Nikethan" internal peace centre was ceremonially opened. Honourable Kuwan Hsin and Professor Cheng Chen who were inspiring forces to us in the achievement of this grave task were the chief guests. Professor Cheng was holding the chairmanship of Torch of Wisdom organization in Taiwan.

Section of the crowd participated for ceremony

The primary objective of Vishwa Nikethan is Healing of mind, Healing of society and Healing of nature. Following is the analysis of its objectives.

- Awakening the power within people
- Spreading compassion to the living world.

- ❖ Fostering inter-religious, inter-racial, inter-tribal, inter-political and inter-nation understanding.
- ❖ Safeguarding of fundamental rights and human rights.
- ❖ Establishment of world peace.

In order to continue this mission it was proposed that the Vishwa Nikethan maintained the following four services:

- ❖ Live institute
- ❖ Library of peace
- ❖ Museum of peace
- ❖ Methsith program

Vishwa Nikethan has so far launched 10 programs:

1. Daham or Religious Approach to Maternity
2. Program for Spiritual Mind Healing of Prisoners.
3. Program for Psychophysical Health.
4. Knowledge of Spiritual Values and Peace for Children.
5. Spiritual Approach for School Children.
6. Educational and Spiritual Resources Management Program for Youth.
7. A Spiritual Management Approach for Professionals
8. Meditation and Dharma Discussions.

9. Thripitaka dharma discussions a meditation
10. Meditation teachers/ resource doners/ leadership training.

A Daham or Religious Approach to Maternity

A Daham or Religious Approach to Maternity is the major program conducted by Vishwa Nikethan home of peace. This program discusses the power that only the mother holds: ability to transfuse ideas to a baby growing in the womb. It is a program that teaches how to endow a peace-loving, charitable child to the world with the help of modern scientific inventions and experiments. The program describes with experience and experiments how maternal meditation can develop the mind of the baby while in the womb; how it can shape its attitudes, values, norms, behaviour and lifestyle.

This program is defined by the philosophical guidance of the advisers of Sarvodaya and professional experience of Dr Upali Marasingha. The program, first launched at BMICH under the sponsorship of DSI Group of Companies in the year 2000, has now transformed into a dominant program at national level. The program is in action in Padavi, Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, Galle, and Kandy, Moneragala, Kaluthara, Gampaha and Colombo districts at a national level. Monthly, the program goes on at Vishwa Nikethan.

Program for Spiritual Mind Healing Of Prisoners.

This is the first program conducted by Vishwa Nikethan Home of Peace. Based on the program initiated in India by D. I. G. Mrs. Kiran

Baidi for the rehabilitation and release of its prisoners to the society. The program was implemented in Vishwa Nikethan under the guidance of advisor of Sarvodaya Dr. Mrs. Charika Marasingha.

We have also conducted this program for prison officers, welfare officers and managers. The foundation has been laid to initiate the program in Welikada, Aluthkade, Mahara, Galle, Kaluthara and other prisons all over the country. In Welikada we conduct a three-day program monthly, a ten-day wipassana program annually, and other collective meditation programs. The program, with its popularity among prisoners, became successful in the rehabilitation of even dangerous prisoners indicted with notorious crimes.

Program for Psycho-Physical Health

The objective of this program is to boost confidence in people in medical and psychological medical treatments, especially in the avoidance of wide spread non-infectious diseases.

This program explains how to avoid, minimize, control or cure disease through exercise, meditation, proper eating ways, water and use of music. The program is conducted by Dr. Upali Marasingha. Recently introduced, it is only conducted for our employees as of yet.

Spiritual Values and Knowledge of Peace Childhood.

This program was designed for children mentally affected by war and natural disasters. It was aimed at the restoration of their shattered mentality through drills and activities aimed at restructuring their spiritual and social values, attitudes, inter personal relations and

leadership traits. This program is conducted at Vishwa Nikethan Home of Peace, and in villages through workshops.

Spiritual Approach for School Children

At the request of schools, this program was created for school children aged between 11 to 18 years. Introducing a practical approach to understanding the importance of education, values and objectives of life, attitudes, and how to achieve aims and objectives of life is the aim of this program. Here we discuss how to maintain discipline of students at a satisfactory level. The program improves the discipline required to maintain a balanced parent-teacher-student relationship. It also discusses improvement of interpersonal relationships. Special seminars are conducted, in line of this, for parents and professionals. Conferences are also organized in schools.

Educational and spiritual resources management program for youth.

This program was organized for unemployed school leavers. This communicative program addresses subjects such as problems of youth, professional guidance, leadership, life management, time management and mediation and yogi practices for mental spiritual wellness.

A Spiritual Management Approach for Professionals.

This program was launched for employees of governmental and non-governmental organizations. This a program that provides advice and guidelines to successfully organize and maintain personal life, family life, professional life, social life and spiritual life. It brings into

discussion the unexpected rewards that carrying out your professional duties honestly and with reprehensibility will bring to your life. Here we practically conduct meditating methods and yoga exercises that pave the ways for highly effective decision making.

Meditation and Darma Discussions

This is a program everyone can participate regardless of age. You can select from five-day, three-day and one-day programs conducted by visiting Buddhist monks. The answers religion provide for problems we face in everyday life are discussed here.

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Wanasundara Commission Report Thrown into Dustbin

All organizations in a country involved in social services aimed at uplifting the quantitative values and welfare of its people, exterior to all activities done by the government of that country is defined as Non- Governmental Organizations or NGO. NGOs are widespread in many countries today. Non- Governmental Organizations involve in various activities inclusive of training, advising and financing of various projects in the fields of development, education, health and other essential areas. They channel required resources through donor agencies of developed countries.

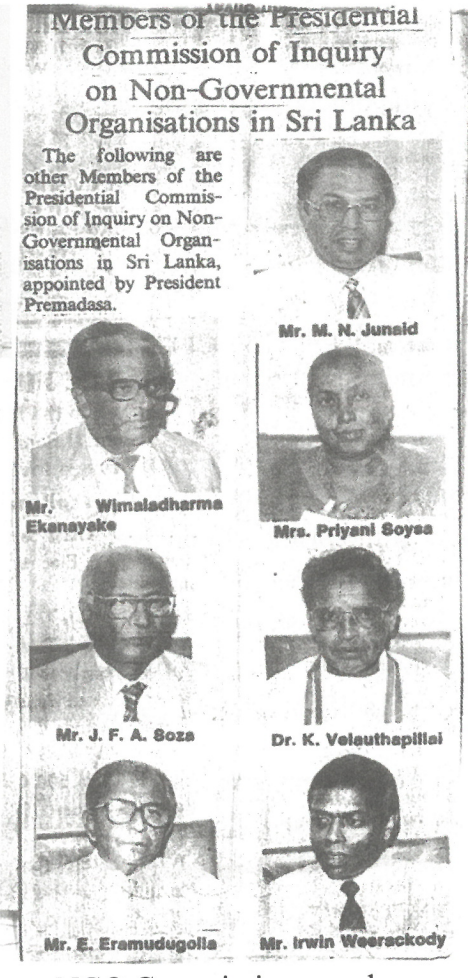
There are also other types of NGO formed, funded and managed by foreign nationals in conjunction with power greedy, corrupt politicians whose selfish, political objectives are hidden under the agenda of serving people. These NGOs serve and survive on political favouritism. They do not have an agenda for serving people. They serve as money machines for their owner.

The Government categorized Sarvodaya too under Non-Governmental Organizations.

In the Colonial era, Sri Lankan leaders formed various national organizations to fight for freedom from colonialism. Amdyapa Movment and the Mahabodi Organization were a few of them. It was in line of and to take forward the peoples' victories of 1950s, the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement was born. During these times the

term NGO was already in existence. But having included Sarvodaya into the category of NGO, the government declared war against it.

Chairman of the Commission Retired Supreme Court judge R. S. Wanasundara


Members of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry on Non-Governmental Organisations in Sri Lanka
The following are other Members of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry on Non-Governmental Organisations in Sri Lanka, appointed by President Premadasa.
Mr. M. N. Junaid
Mr. Wimaladharma Ekanayake
Mrs. Priyani Soysa
Mr. J. F. A. Soza
Dr. K. Velauthapillai
Mr. E. Eramudugolla
Mr. Irwin Weerackody

NGO Commission members

Sarvodaya was a government-approved, internationally reputed organization which was highly acknowledged by United Nations and its combined bodies. Although categorized as an NGO, the most suitable term to describe Sarvodaya would be as a 'people oriented development organization'.

It is the judgment of the people that Sarvodaya is an organization that carries the objective of enlightening the whole global community by first enlightening the individual.

Sarvodaya is an organization legally incorporated under section 16 of parliament of 1972. People is the Driving force of it.

Instead of all our efforts in salvaging the poor from poverty the then government of Sri Lanka looked at our organization from a different hostile point of view.

It was an obvious fact that I and other members of our organization dedicated the prime of our lives towards the welfare of people. Our services for the people are completely different from the "services" done in political stages. Our services solely endowed to poor people were filled with our employee's sweat and philanthropic feelings, rather than selfish, power greedy objectives.

The government of the newly-elected president Ranasingha Premadasa released a special gazette on the 17th of December 1990. The president had established a six member commission to investigate activities of NGOs in the country. This was just a week after he was elected as the president.

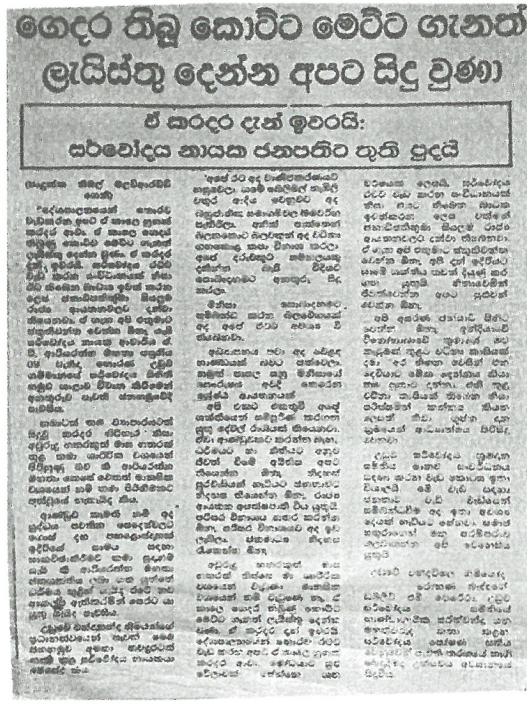
Retired Supreme Court judge R. S. Wanasundara, Mr. Wimaladarma Ekanayake, Dr. Priyani Soiza, retired Supreme Court judge J. F. A. De Zoisa, Mr. A Aramudugolla, Mr. K Welaudapille, and Mr. Ervin Weerakkody were the members of the commission. Because retired judge Wanasundara was the chairman, the commission was also known as Wanasundara Commission. Mr. Wimaladarma Ekanayake was the secretary.

Although the commission was said to have established to investigate all the NGOs in the country, it was obvious that its sole hidden objective was to sabotage activities of Sarvodaya by accusing and jailing me. In a short period a stream of insults, thuggery, and death threats began to flow over me as the leader of Sarvodaya, and my family members as though we were criminals. Government's abrupt, shrewd attention directly focused on Sarvodaya just after the conclusion of 1989 presidential election was a bad omen.

Investigations were being going on for 18 months in a special division of Criminal Investigation Department, and an exhausting 9 sectional questionnaire was sent to us by Wanasundara Commission for answers and evidences. Various bodies of government including Criminal Investigation Department, Sri Lanka Customs, Inland revenue, Ministry of Labour, Bribery Commission started investigating the activities of Sarvodaya not only to depress us mentally and physically but also to sabotage and destroy all meritorious work we had yielded so far with hardwork.

We submitted over 10,000 pages of answers and evidence to Wanasundara Commission and various other government bodies. We had nothing to hide.

On the 29th of September, 1992 our representatives gave evidence at the Wanasundara Commission. They very politely cooperated with the officers of the commission. The members of the commission must have noticed the politeness, authenticity trustworthiness and transparency rooted in the personnel of Sarvodaya.



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ඒ කරදර දැන් ඉවරයි: සර්වෝදය නායක ජනපතිට තුති පුදයි

The officers of CID and the commission, failing to find or gather any clue to fabricate a case against us, desperately dug into every document we had. Working overnight almost every day we provided all the documents and written evidence requested. We submitted statements for over 112 persons. They had requested details of all bank accounts and transactions of mine and those belonging to all of my family members in order to find a clue to frame me.

The briefing of the objectives of the commission contained in the questionnaire sent to us was entirely different from these actions of the commission. What the briefing said was that the special commission was set up by the president with the objective of creating a close, sustainable relationship with NGOs and the government by investigating their activities and rectifying any inappropriate activity or illegal misuse of donor funds. Since all of the details were required within a short period of 3 weeks, we had to work exhaustively day and night to meet the deadline.

Always aspiring after the truth on behalf of Sarvodaya, we do not fear anybody or anything.

This was the behaviour of the special NGO commission of the President, and I should mention here, that the government media at the Lake House was also very caddishly attacking me and our organization by this time.

All these were taking place in an era where our country was sinking into an abyss of despair. Because of man's instinctive nature of believing what he reads or hear without verification, these biased, partial newspapers become successful in transforming lies into truth and spreading. This was not true about all newspapers. There were fearless fair newspapers. They always condemned Polities of Lake House media.

British prime minister once said that irresponsible abusing of power by newspapers is like a prostitute using her privileges for her own desires. Not only the government newspapers but also other government media continually attacked us. The section of D. I. D.

assigned to question us was doing the questioning from the date the president was elected. The radio program "Sarvodaya and You" conducted by us for years was suddenly closed. All other radio programs regarding important activities of Sarvodaya conducted by the Broadcasting Corporation of Sri Lanka was prohibited by the prime minister and other ministers.

In that era, Sarvodaya, blossoming island wide, had developed into a people's movement never before seen in the history of Sri Lanka. Although we had gained wide acceptance through foreign media, what the local media did was to attack us. They failed to recognize our remarkable achievements. They avoided giving any publicity to "August Floral" and "Jamnalal Bajaj" international prizes awarded to me in 1990.

We faced uncountable CID investigations. Government newspapers Sillumina, Dinamina, Sunday Observer and the rest continued to spread false allegations against us. Because of unbearable suppression, I decided, as the leader of Sarvodaya, to make an official statement to the government. This statement was my response to an organized mechanism launched against us under the sole instruction of a country's powerful politician.

"When the serving of people is sabotaged in this manner, people who are expecting or liable to receive that service is suffered. I have served my country to the fullest, and I never even used any money I received as international awards for my personal needs. Money received for the Magsaysay prize was donated to Sarvodaya, and the prize money from Jamnalal Bajaj Award was deposited for the use of annual prize-giving ceremonies for those who serve nation. The money was never lent to

anybody unless specified in section 31 of 1984. As specified in section 16 of 1972, lending of money is not allowed. Leaving aside the antagonistic approach of newspapers against us, we considered the presidential NGO commission as an impartial law abiding body, but opportunists used the commission along with the government to insult and sabotage us.

I served people while refraining from politics for the past four decades, facing insults and intimidations armed with the conceptions of Mahatma Gandhi. I do not insult or accuse anybody. I lived for a purpose. I do not have a job to lose, but if I lose my civil legal right to serve people, I will lose everything"

"The NGO commission seemed to deliberately keep their distance from us to avert building up of amity between us in order create a space to attack us. I personally believe that every individual, every NGO, every country and United Nations should get together to face and defeat these kinds of unfair situations. If the government continues to indulge in this ignoble, unfair inhuman acts, millions of destitute people will lose opportunity of receiving services meant to uplift their living conditions" This was my official statement.

A pool of lawyers under the leadership of attorney Niranjan Sinnathambi appeared on behalf of us in the commission. A request made by attorney Sinnathambi not to summon me until all of the evidence was recorded, was turned down. As a result, I and several officers of our organization was summoned.

Having concluded recording of evidence, the commission announced their 67 page verdict on 12th February 1993. It contained the verdict,

reason for setting up of the commission, juristic definition of accusations against Sarvodaya, and an appendix of its shortcomings. The answer for our request to inform us about the accusation in advance was that it was not possible under the normal law but only in accordance with the commission's own guidelines.

The commission's plan was to find or fabricate corruptions in the administration, money transactions or activities of Sarvodaya, publicize them and act against Sarvodaya openly. To say in other words many sections of the verdict was full of sarcastic phrases. Instead of being document of rule, logic and truth of what was discussed in the commission, the verdict was just a list of 49 shortcomings said to be in Sarvodaya. The complete verdict was published on all government newspapers to insult us island-wide. All accusations had been fabricated using details provided to the commission by us.

To the dismay of Sarvodaya, though not discussed in the commission, International Sarvodaya, Viswaleka, Rehabilitation Programs, Fixed Assets and Projects of organization had been listed in the verdict as areas that has to be further investigated.

Also, it was not I who should have given evidence in the commission at the first place. The relevant sectional heads should have done that. The request made by our attorney to conduct the initial inquiries confidentially was turned down.

Our attorney Sinnathambi, saying that the commission did not follow the fundamental just proceedings in summoning Sarvodaya into the

inquiry, cited the judgment of judge Shivananda against Fernando in the verdict of Jayarathna.

Citing a significant definition from Wade's law of administration attorney Sinnathambi said in an inquiry like this with a wide publicity the person inquired may get strict accusation for which he will have least one opportunity to make an answer.

"Considering the other side of the conduct of the commission, the presidential NGO commission had been established based on a certain report. No one knew what that report was, and the only study about the NGOs in Sri Lanka was done by Ministry of Planning It is a very positive report about Sarvodaya," said attorney, Sinnathambi.

Apart from the acts of the commission, there was no end to the troubles we received. There were 109 newspaper articles against me and Sarvodaya. None of them was inquired by the commission. All of the aids given by the Asian Foundation sponsoring Sarvodaya's Legal Aid Section that was conducted by volunteer lawyers, advisers, police and government officers, was stopped by ministry of planning and implementation. A British voluntary officer who came to work on our other program "Socio Environmental Forest Project", also funded by Asian Foundation, was not allowed by the presidential secretariat. The ones who suffered were the desperate poor. By the fact that all other NGOs came under the inquiry of the commission were allowed to function freely, it was obvious that the government's only objective was to sabotage Sarvodaya.

The house in which we conducted training programs for disabled youth was suddenly repossessed after just 8 days' notice.

We had incorporated, under the company's act, a saving scheme for children attached to our rural development programs. Instituted among a very poor rural community, and developed with extreme hard work, this saving scheme had 50 Rupees deposits for over 200,000 poor children. The government, shamefully attacking this welfare program for destitute poor children and sent a written warning through the central bank of Sri Lanka, saying that "necessary actions" will be taken against it. Sabotaging all of the peoples' welfare schemes of Sarvodaya was what the government desperately strived to do.

After receiving the 8 death threat on one particular midnight, I decided to issue a statement to the government for the second time. All the members of our family continued to face the situations with discomfiture and nervousness. I should mention the fact that the Lake House newspaper indulged in assassination of our character by spreading the false rumour that Sarvodaya involves in selling babies locally and abroad. Sarvodaya is not an organization that was ever involved in a barbaric trade of selling babies. Hundreds of thousands of loyal people that live in the Sarvodaya rural communities could not be deceived by fabricated political disinformation. Our loyal community who have been with us for decades is a strength to us.

The increasing gap between law and justice ameliorated the confidence within us in truth and righteous law. We strongly believed that righteous law will protect righteous man.

The instant the news hit the media that I had been qualified for the Niwano Peace Prize, the then Sri Lanka ambassador in Japan sent a petition to Niwano Foundation complaining that A. T. Ariyaratne of Sri Lanka is trying to enter politics and that his organization is under

the investigation of the presidential commission for corruption, and consequently he is not suitable for the prize.

In April, 1992, I and Neetha went to Japan to receive the prize. In June, I received an array of questions sent by the Central Bank of Sri Lanka, signed by the controller of immigration and emigration. They directly questioned as to whether I brought the money received in Japan to Sri Lanka, if so to declare them and/or if they are deposited abroad, to reveal the whereabouts. I wrote that I just received a medal and certificate by them.

The foundation came to an agreement with me to send the money only after the situation in the country become suitable for that. I also wrote that the cash received for the prize will never be utilized for my personal use.

When the commission issued its verdict on the 12th of February, the Government's next move was to confiscate the printing machine donated to us by a foreign agency which was with Customs by that time. But when we appealed, the Supreme Court released it at once.

Our appeals received a compassionate attention at the Supreme Court, compared to the partial attitude of the NGO commission. The decision of the panel of judges of Supreme Court was that the conduct of the Customs was not impartial, and that it had violated the fundamental right of Sarvodaya to enjoy equal opportunity.

One of the three fundamental right violation cases we filed was the arresting and detaining without charges of our district female officers who came to our Moratuwa headquarters from Trincomalee for an

official matter. They were compelled to sleep on tables and subjected to enormous harassment, and within the two months they were detained, one even fell ill after an abortion. The instant the case was brought up in the high court, they were released.

Even at that time, the international recognition I received was a result of my writings, lectures, and the intellectuals who recognized and admired my services for the rural poor community. It was not earned by force using injustice or power politics. These poor people are always with us, and they can never be deceived.

Several figures who were at the pinnacle of power considered me and the mission of Sarvodaya a gigantic parasite against their survival. Suppressing, sabotaging and harassing Sarvodaya by a special commission came under the condemnation of many fair minded rationalized people who knew the true nature of Sarvodaya.

All governments coming into power strive to gain the total attraction and loyalty of the people towards them, and when there is a leader with a gigantic organization wining the hearts of the majority of the people, it is seen by the government as another government which can be a threat to their survival. This was the reason pointed out by many for the government's antagonistic behaviour against Sarvodaya.

Mr. Dulan Silva of "Seeds", Mrs. Seetha Rajasooriya of "Kulangana Sandeshaya", Bishop Fredric Nauman, Ven. Kuppiyawtte Bodananda of Samodaya and Neetha Ariyaratne of Suwasetha were few of the members of Sarvodaya who gave evidence in the Wanasundara commission.

On the 2nd of August 1993, by an affidavit, we provided answers for all of the allegations of Wanasundara commission. By this time it was obvious that the commission had become a court issuing verdicts of King Kekille, and I declared it openly.

After the demise of president Pramadasa, the appointed president D. B. Wijethunga and his cabinet paid no attention to the NGO commission because they knew that the only intention of appointing the commission was to take personal revenge. However, apart from Mr. Wanasundara and one other who acted under the fear of the president all other members of the commission wanted to conclude it.

Accordingly, the commission prepared a report and presented to President Wijethunga. Supreme Court judge J. F. A. Zoisa presented an alternative report against the recommendations of the commission. In that Judge Zoisa not only cleared us from all the accusations in the report of the commission but also commended the services of Sarvodaya.

In the alternative report judge Zoisa had said that he did not wish to see the sword of Damocles hung over the head of Sarvodaya for two-and-half years hanging there for another two-and-a-half years, and that he strictly overruled the request made by Wanasundara commission to investigate the activities of Sarvodaya for another two-and-a-half years.

President D. B. Wijethunga threw the Wanasundara report into the dustbin. It has not been confirmed at an official commission report.

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Although the commission got nullified after 14 years, even today there are individuals who try to insult me by presenting allegations under the pretense that they are the findings of the NGO commission, again, using Lake House newspapers. Without wasting time in addressing these, we drive our organization ahead better than ever. We answer them with our good deeds.

There is this peculiar person describing himself to be a social scientist whose hobby is to dig others' garbage bins. He never seems to see goodness in anybody. He has been publishing leaflets insulting Sarvodaya for the past 30 years. His latest attempt was to write a book about Sarvodaya and publish it in India. The source for the book is said to be a collection of petitions and accusations sent by various persons to the NGO commission. I never met anyone who had read the book or talked about it even after several years following its publication.

Although I had pardoned him within me, there was still a tinge of displeasure when I was made to remember him. Meanwhile, I got an unexpected invitation to deliver a speech to a large assembly as the intended chief guest was delayed in attending it. I was introduced for the speech by the wife of the above mentioned person. I had very rarely heard such a praiseworthy introduction. After her commendation, the displeasure in my mind about her husband vanished.

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Assembly of World Religious Parliament - 1993

The festival to commemorate 100 years of the World Religious Parliament was held in Chicago in 1993 and went on for a week starting on the 28th of August. I consider the opportunity to participate in the second assembly of the World Religious Parliament as an important event in my life. The general secretary of the assembly was Dr. Daniel Gomez Ibanez.

He invited me to conduct the main speech and several other speeches in other sessions. They had selected 20 chairmen from all over the world, including Ven. Dalai Lama, and I was one of them.

I arrived at New York prior to the assembly and spent several days at my friend Abee and Mert Mazen's home. I had the opportunity to meet once more Mert's mother Juliet and her best friend Goda. They were at the age of 89. On the 28th I said goodbye to them, and from Lavasia airport I reached Chicago aboard an American Airline flight. Professor David Kalupahana and Dr. Mrs. Pat Master were also at the airport, and all of us were welcomed by Professor George Bond. We were given accommodation in the Hotel Pamahouse Clinton.

It was a pleasure to see that Ven. Mapalagamage Vipulasara, Ven. Ruwanpola Rathanasara, Ven. Medagama Vajirananda, Ven. Hegalle Mahinda, Ven. Walpola Piyananda and Ven. Gonawala Jinarathana Theros had also arrived for the assembly. My old friend Dr. S. H. J. Sugunasiri and Dr. Ananda Guruge were also there.

On the 29th afternoon over five thousand five hundred representatives were seated in the main hall. After the American tribal cultural ceremony, the inter-religious reconciliation statement of the World Religious Parliament was issued. The inter-religious reconciliation statement of Sri Lanka was issued by Ambassador Dr. Ananda Guruge. He also mentioned in his speech about Anagarika Dharmapala who was dear to the assembly.

Every day there was a theme speech, and the director of Mayen Millennium, Mr. Jerald O Bani delivered an important speech under the heading "What Shall We Do".

Professor Ciril Ponnamperuma also delivered a speech. After the introduction of Dr. William Wendli, I delivered a main speech under the heading 'Religion and Conflict Solving'. The following day I conducted my opening speech. Mrs. Hema Goonathilake also did a speech.

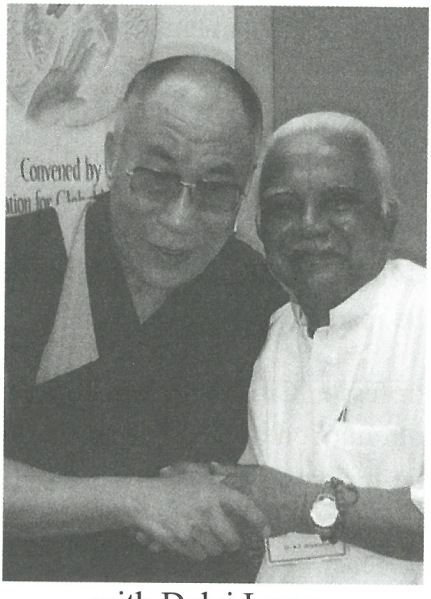
In the past 2500 years many religions spread across the world, and millions of people picked one. Religion teaches man how to meaningfully handle and shape his life from birth to death. And it guides him to gain inner peace and to protect it. Also it is a great power that salvages man from suffering and leads him towards the understanding of truth.

We hear every day about the conflicts man gets into based on religion. It is because they forget that religion is a powerful weapon capable of protecting man's progress and peace. Emphasizing the value of this extremely important weapon, and as an initial step towards achieving universal peace, and turning a new page in history, the first World

Religious Parliament was held in Chicago in 1893 with the participation of religious and political heads of states from around the word.

In the name of religion and peace, leaders of people and religion of all continents were seated together in the same hall in Chicago for the first time in history. The commemoration of finding of America by Columbus 400 years ago was also partially accounted for this gathering.

Invited leaders of all sects of religion, leaders of people, and leaders of media and scholars of all religions from all over the world were gathered in Chicago.



with Dalai Lama

Chicago was situated in the state of Illinois. The forum was held by the Foundation of International Religions formed by the Colombian Exposition in conjunction with the Unification Church. Organization, development and function of the forum were undertaken by Ecumenical Research Forum.

Successfully concluded as a result of overall objectives and planning of all of these organizations, the first forum of World Parliament of Religions managed to create a novel enthusiasm and awakening in the fields of religion, race, society and culture of mankind.

The second World Forum of Religions was held in 1985(November 15-21) at Americana Great Conference Hall in New Jersey in America, then in 1989, and lastly in 1993 in Chicago. I failed to participate in 1985 as a result of the tensed situation in the country.

Since the themes in relation to the objective were sent to all representatives, observation and discussions were done in line with subjects. It was a procedure followed in every forum. The forum was a platform opening doors for the face-to-face meeting of all beliefs, religions, cultures and traditions of west and the east.

The representative of India Swami Vevekananda miraculously became world famous through the first forum by fluently analyzing the core essence of Buddhist philosophy and its equality and relation to Veda. He spoke about the entire field of religion with elaborated analyses in relation to Buddhism, Christianity and Islam.

Spiritual training programs consisting of meditation, prayer, learning, documentary films, and lectures, which are tools for understanding the unity of the entire mankind and the true meaning of universal religious culture, had been organized in the forum.

To sustain international unity by the clear interchanging of global religious values, it was expected to gain a contribution to sustain international unity and to human development. Senior leaders were selected for lectures. How should we use various spiritual resources we possess to solve contemporary conflicts for perfect, profound spiritual lives? Are these resources sufficient for the present and the future? Shouldn't we creatively update our lost traditions in order to repossess them? What are the energies endowed to us by those values?

To find answers to these questions, to gain an amicable context for a critical evaluation process, to find factors required to enjoy this honourable heritage, relevant classical topics were chosen for the forum.

In all Parliament Forums held, attention was paid in 1985 to the past, in 1989 to the present and in 1993 for the future. In 1993 an evaluation was done on the achievements of all the past forums. Taken as a whole, the results were defined as simple, critical examples of present and the past, relatively updated to suit the present.

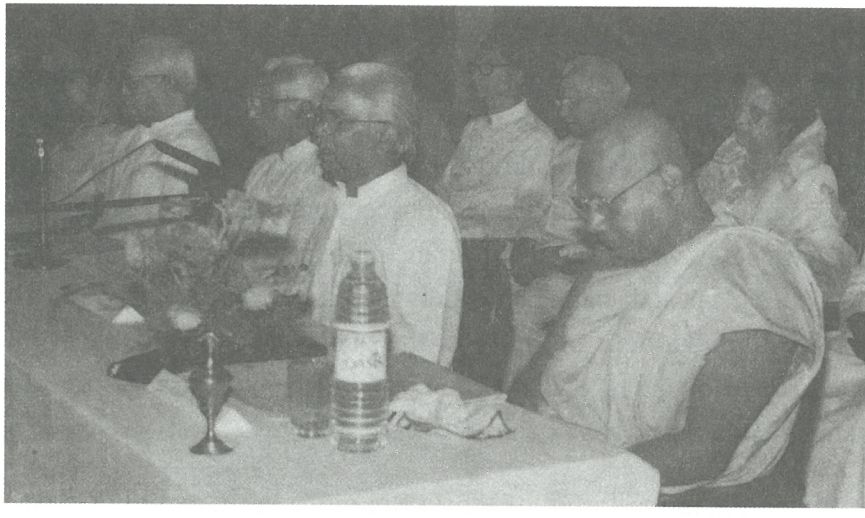
The education of members of the Religious Parliament to respect the values of other religions, successful perpetuation of the international religious dialogue, discussion on improving each other's resources, fundamentals, and the improvement of spiritual awareness, can be shown as the noted activities of the forum.

One of the most unforgettable moments of the forum is the opportunity to address an audience of over fifty thousand people along with Ven. Dalai Lama at the Grand Park open theatre in Chicago.

Trying to indulge in discharging of greed, hatred and ignorance in you even for few hours, the resulting compassion, mercy and awareness will be a valuable blessing. One hundred years ago this very forum was addressed by the great Anagarika Dharmapala of Sri Lanka and the great saint of India Hon. Swami Wivekananda in this same city. That was in 1893. The valuable doctrine preached by those great fellows must have been seen as strange and irrelevant norms for the people of that era.

In 1893, Anagarika Darmapala of Sri Lanka said: "to be born as a man in this world is a miraculous benefit. Man's sublimity depends upon his capacity to live a pure, exemplary life with wisdom mixed with analytical insight." That citation confirms that sublimity of humanity is gained through generous condescending. Discarding of these defilements is what drives him to the pinnacle, surpassing wealth or power. In the past decade man widely increased his knowledge, and he spread his monopoly not only in the galaxy but also to the whole universe. However, the outcome of releasing compassion and benevolence would have been entirely different.

Participating in the forum of World Religious Parliament in Chicago helped me to widen my knowledge and experience in the field of religions of the world. I was pleased to see effective handling and management of profound and deep theoretical models in the extensive field of religion. I was also pleased with the above expected acclamation received for my lecture. And I thought that it was imprudent to be inactive, having seen the potentials of the forum that can be applied for the benefit of society, and that I should proceed to formulate a program to pass it to our people and country. This conception struck my mind while I was in Chicago. So I decided to hold a mini World Religious Parliament in Sri Lanka, and invited Dr. M. Aram, the representative of India, for the main speech.



A meeting held at Nalanda College, Colombo
on 19th of December 1993
Participation Prof. Ven. Bellanwila Wimalaratne, Me,
Prof. W. N. K. B. Wijetunga, Mrs. Seetha Rajasooriya,
Mrs. Jeesima Ismail, Swami Arthmanandhrajee Maharaj

On 19th of December 1993 we held our extremely successful mini World Religious Parliament in Sri Lanka. The theme of the day was "Spiritual Unity through Religions". The Venue was the conference hall of Nalanda College where we started Sarvodaya, years ago. Ven. Belanwila Wimalarathana Thero, Swami Athmanandraji Maharaj, Mrs. Jessima Ismaile and Fr. Oswald Perth were invited as Buddhist, Hindu, Islamic and Christian lecturers. The theme for other speeches was "Challenges and Trends Affecting Uniting through Religions". Mrs. Siwanandani Duraisami spoke about "Deterioration of conscientiousness", and Professor Kalo Fonseka delivered a fine lecture on "Is the World Reaching End Time". My speech was titled "To the World from Chicago".

Ilga Memorial International Award

This internal award is presented in memory of Dr. Yong Ki Kim known under the famous name ILGA who was a foremost leader in Korean awakening. The award was established by International ILGA Memorial Foundation in Seoul, South Korea, and it is the most outstanding organization in Korea delivering significant services in the field of social studies. I was selected for the 1995 award for my outstanding services towards the human community. Mr. O. Joe Geel, the chairman of Junloang Association of Korea had also been selected for his services in agriculture. The award ceremony was held in Farmer's School in Hanath city of Korea on the 2nd of September 1995.

at the award ceremony

This was the 10th international award I received, in consequence of which ties between Sarvodaya and Korea further improved. Dr. Yong Kee Kim's contribution to development of South Korea, and the wealth the Korean people earned with it is a moderate example for all. "As an Asian country, we are proud of the status the South Koreans have achieved through hard work, and we further admire their endeavours to regain the spiritual values lost as a result of colonial rule", I wrote in a letter sent to the General secretary of Foundation of ILGA award.

Dr. Yong Kee Kim

Dr. Yong Kee Kim, who was known as the father of famers, was a great leader during the Korean struggle for freedom form Japanese colonialism. Commenced in 1931, this program managed to drive the country ahead by developing and cultivating barren lands, and since he was successful in uplifting the fast industrializing South Korean society to a higher standard, he was awarded the 1966 Magsaysay Award for outstanding community service.

Because the father of Dr. Kee Kim, on his dying bed, had implored Dr. Kee Kim to become a magnificent farmer, he dedicated his life to becoming an exemplary one. He motivated Korean people to hold education in high regard to uplift the living conditions. The farmers' school where the ILGA award ceremony was held, Ayon Church and Farm, and the High School of Farmers are his creations. He passed away in 1988.

In 1996 and 1997, I was in Korea for the ILGA award ceremony and other official functions. There I met several important people who

became lifetime friends close to my heart. Special among them was Professor Mrs. Park Chung Tsu who was known as "Mother of Asia". She was of a rare personality, equal to Mother Theresa, who dedicated her life towards the elimination of poverty and disease, and universal peace through inter-religious reconciliation.

A Sectarian of Won Buddhism which evolved in Korea in the 20th century, she held higher posts in several internationally known organizations. She strived to propagate the sectarian concept, stating: "the only way to salvage world is by dispersing spiritual energy among people through powers emitting from a true religion, and nurturing moral customs, formalities and virtues among people". She help to create reconciliation in every religion. She wrote to me saying that she was glad to meet me, and that she felt a familiarity and closeness the instant she saw me. She was kind enough to contribute to Suwasetha of Sarvodaya.

The General Secretary of the Korean Joint Buddhist Organization, Hon. Pomnim Yung was another important person who became a friend of mine in South Korea. The chairman of ILGA International Award Foundation, Mr. San Wong Kim, General secretary Mrs. Danran Kim, Professor Cheng of Seoul National University and Mrs. Jenny Park were other people who became my friends in Korea.

The presentation ceremony was held on the 2nd of September 1995. Neetha and I arrived in Seoul a day earlier. As we were scheduled for several more foreign journeys, our stay was limited to 3 days. We were given accommodation at the Olympic Park Hotel. There I met several of my friends in Korea, including Ven. Kalyanwansa Thero of Seoul International Zen Centre. We also participated in a press meeting.

Being ushered to ILGA memorial hall.

Welcome

Welcome by former prime minister

Awarding of the prize by Korean president Kim Yung

On the 2nd day we were taken to the ILGA memorial hall at the Farmers School in Kanan. The award ceremony commenced at 04:30pm and concluded at 05:00pm. Korean president Kim Yam Sang presented the award to me. The worth of the prize was 20,000 US Dollars.

During the ceremony with special guests

After the award ceremony

By that time, Sarvodaya had started development programs in 10,000 villages out of the 20,000 villages in Sri Lanka, and they were highly appraised by everyone. As a required procedure of the foundation, 30 photographs were displayed at the foyer of the conference hall depicting my services and contributions to human community. Mr. Kim Nishel, who held the chairmanship of the committee of ILGA awards for several years, wrote to the then-General secretary of Asbey, Professor W. M. K. Wijethunga saying that they had enough reasons to declare that ILGA was the Ariyaratna of Korea.

Professor Shin Miyon and Professor Thedesko of Korean Urban and Ecological Experiment Centre in Seoul organized the lectures for my 1996 October Korean tour. I also participated in the opening ceremony of Joint Together Association where there was an introduction of an article written about the services of Sarvodaya.

On the 3rd of September we visited the tomb of ILGA. On the same day, under the invitation of the South Korean president, we had dinner at his official residence "Blue House" along with Professor Shim of UNESCO. The Following day we flew back to Sri Lanka.

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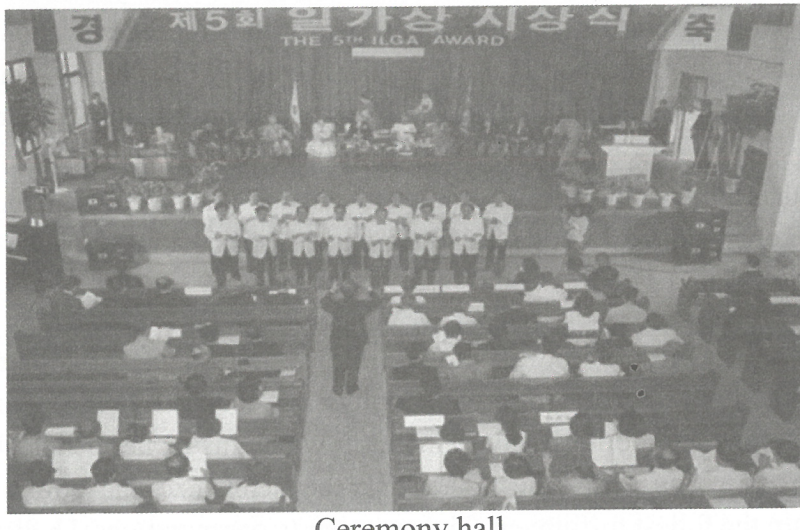
Speech at The Presentation of Ilga Award

The most visible elements of modern human society seem to be revolving around concepts of achieving power, wealth and gratification of animal instincts in man. It is greed, ill will and self-centeredness that lie at the root of these base desires. There is a lot of media coverage given to the vicious results of this situation such as human sufferings caused by wars, mass murders, individual crimes, terminal diseases like AIDS and most people living in a state of fear.

In this darkness human beings appear from time to time who try to shed some light into the human and communities. Dr Yong-ki Kim was such a great human personality whose life and service you are commemorating today. It is my good fortune that I am called upon to be present here on this occasion. It gives me great delight and inspiration to continue the work I am doing in the spirit of ILGA the fond name by which he was popularly known.

First of all I would like to pay my tribute to the Board of Trustees of ILGA Memorial Award Foundation for the effort they are putting into perpetuate the memory of this great human personality and continue with his mission. I am grateful to them for selecting me to receive the prestigious 1995 ILGA Memorial Award on this occasion This I consider to be recognition and an honour given to tens and thousands of my brothers and sisters who are living in rural areas of Sri Lanka trying to build a sustainable and peaceful society based on values such as love, justice and service which Dr Kim passionately pursued.



Ceremony hall

When I received your letter informing me that I have been chosen unanimously to receive this prestigious award for Public Service, I felt very humble. I compared the great sacrifice that ILGA made to his people compared to what I may have rendered to humanity in my lifetime. I was born 22 years after he was born. He received the Ramon

Magsaysay Award for public service in 1966, three years before I received the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Community Leadership in 1969.

He was born to a Christian family and he lifted up his service in the true spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ, being non-sectarian in his approach to human service. I born to a Buddhist family, try to serve in the true spirit of Lord Buddha's teachings by being non-sectarian and trying to be compassionate to all living beings. He had absolute trust in rural communities and village life which I share with him. Like Mahatma Gandhi, education was foremost in his mind. The dignity of labour in working with hands was an integral part of the kind of education he believed in. Education is meaningful when only it awakens human personality to the fullest. Taking all these into consideration I have to says that the "Bokniminism" the will to strive for the way of living in truth is the principle that is common to both the Movement he founded in Korea and the Sarvodaya Movement in Sri Lanka in which we are engaged in.

Sarvodaya means the awakening of all in every respect. Every human being should be provided with a physical, social, moral, cultural, economic and political environment in which his or her personality can be awaken to the fullest. Then only the members of the family can attain the fullest fulfillment. The community organizations, I believe, should be the foundation on which not only individual and family awakening should take place, but also should be the foundation on which the nations and the global society should be built.

With these high ideals, 38 years ago we launched the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka. Today we are working tirelessly

to assist ten thousand village communities out of a total of twenty four thousand in our country to tread the path of Sarvodaya.

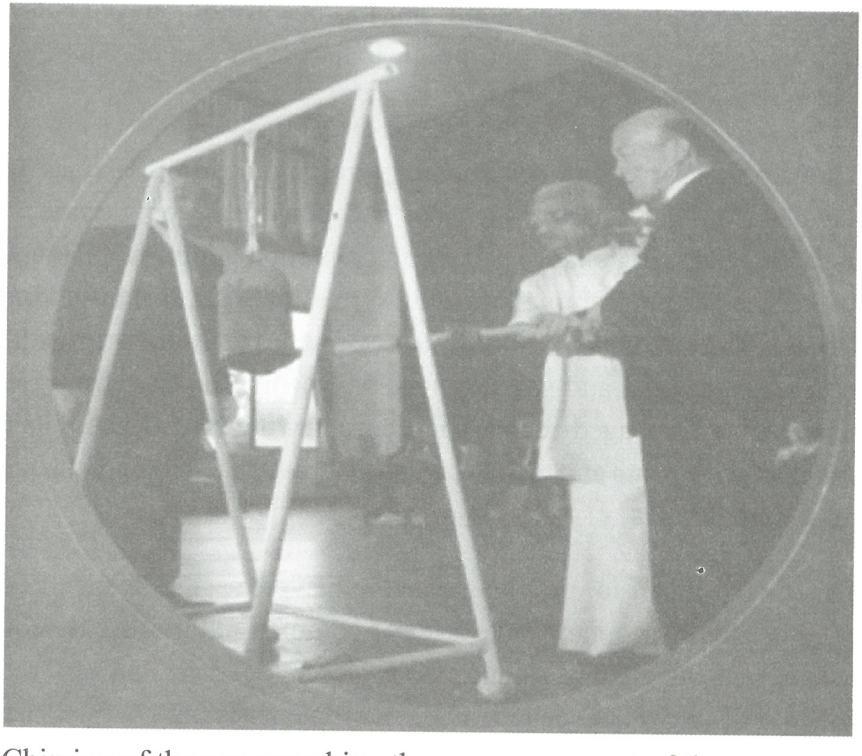
If we are to build a society where peace and prosperity for all are to be achieved we have to give highest to the values of truth, non-violence and selflessness. Our priority should be to help those are the poorest and the most powerless to overcome their poverty and powerlessness. To empower those who are at the lowest strata in society programmes have to be launched which simultaneously release processes of social, economic and the technological empowerment. This means an integrated programme where spiritual, moral and cultural elements as well as social, economic and political factors are given equal and balanced consideration.

Through the Sarvodaya development programmes in Sri Lanka we have succeeded in motivating poor and powerless communities to develop their self-reliance, community participation and planning scientifically a programme of action. As a result of this in thousands of places there are daily efforts made to improve nutrition, health, educational, social and spiritual levels of people ranging from pre-school children to aged people. Children and women work shoulder to shoulder with youth and men to build a just sustainable society in their rural communities.

This award given to me today has another great significance Your country and my country have a lot of common cultural roots. Your people and our people should come closer together. Already very friendly ties exist between the two governments of our countries and our two peoples. It is my task now to do whatever small services I can

do with my colleagues in the Sarvodaya Movement to strengthen our bonds of friendship.

Your people have seen wars. At this moment our people are also experiencing a civil war in the northern and the eastern parts of our country. Our efforts should not only be directed to improve the standards of living and spiritual advancement of our people but we should also do everything possible to build bridges of peace and brotherhood in the hearts and minds of our people first and then the peoples of the world next.



Chiming of the gong marking the commencement of the ceremony

The world has had enough of bloodshed and human suffering. There are millions who have become orphaned, widowed, disabled and homeless. Most of them have had nothing to do with violence. They were only victims of ideological, communal and various other forms of violence. We should work very hard to remove once and for all from the minds of people the seeds of division and alienation, and urge them in every possible way to think as one global family shedding all man-made barriers.

Let us try to build this world into a global society consisting non violent communities which are networked both at the level of the mind by spiritual means and the level of friendly communication through highly developed modern communication technology. Korea which has such a wealth of spiritual energy and a highly advanced economy should be a beacon-light for the rest of us Asia at the turn of the century. If we can achieve this we would have truly remembered and honoured Dr Youg-ki Kim our beloved servant of humanity.

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Gandhi Peace Award

On behalf of the 125th memorial of Mahatma Gandhi, The International Gandhi Award was established by the ministry of cultural affairs under the sponsorship of the government of India. I was awarded the second Gandhi Peace Award in 1996. The first Gandhi Prize had been awarded in 1995 to Dr. Julius K. Nyerere who was the then president of Tanzania. Worldwide Propagation of non-violence treasured by Mahatma Gandhi, formulation of strategies to induce social, economic and political change through non-violent means, to find answers to ardent questions people face by applying non-violent strategies formulated by Gandhi, being in the pursuance of serving for peace and non-violence, and dedicating one's life to perpetuate human rights and development for poverty-stricken people are the factors taken into consideration in the selection process for the award. Racial, religious or tribal prejudice is not entertained for selection.

I had been selected out of about 60 nominations by a jury under the leadership of the prime minister of India in which the opposition leader, vice president and the chief justice were also members. This was what appeared in the statement issued by the ministry of cultural affairs of India: "Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne of Sri Lanka has been selected for the 1996 Gandhi Peace Price. A Sri Lankan renowned social scientist and a philanthropist Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne, aged 65, was unanimously selected for this prestigious international award for his non-violent, life-dedicated contribution for a social, economic and

political transformation. Nominations were received from almost all countries, including persons of distinguished ranks such as members of parliament, holders of Nobel Prize, secretary general of United Nations, chancellors, heads of research institutes, general secretary of commonwealth, governors, chief ministers and many other bodies.

With Indian president

He is an accomplished author. He has published many works on philosophy and global peace and non-violence. Dr. Ariyaratne has been awarded with many international awards including the Desa Bandu award in Sri Lanka, Jamnalal Bajaj award in 1990 and the 9th Niwano Peace award in 1992. He is the chairman of the Asian Rural Development Organization. He also functions as the chairman of advisory committee of the World Bank's non-governmental organizations and as the chairman of the World Religious Parliament".

The Gandhi Peace Prize consists of a medal and a cheque to the value of ten million Indian Rupees.

On the 1st of October, 1996, the Indian government newspapers reported that "to honour his internationally famed three decades of dedicated social service to stimulate inherent potential and uplift the living conditions of rural community, Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne of Sri Lanka is scheduled to be awarded the Gandhi Peace Award"

On the 1st of October, 1996, I receive an unexpected telephone call from the Indian commissioner in Sri Lanka. The commissioner, with congratulations, said that the Indian government had informed him that I have been selected for the Gandhi Peace Award. I shouldn't say how delighted I was to hear the news.

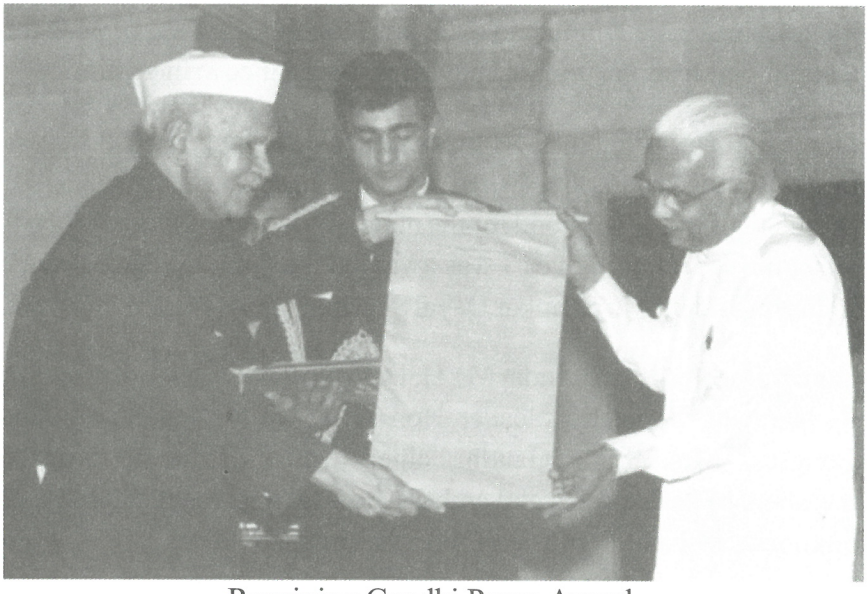
I wrote to the prime minister of India Mr. H. D. Dave Gauda that I considered the awarding of the prize a great honour to me, and that the exemplary life and teachings of Mahatma Gandhi was a great energy for all of my community services. The Hindu had run the statement I made that the influence of Indian leaders was a helping force for all of

my missions. The Hindu had even praised my following of Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy though I never had the chance to meet him.

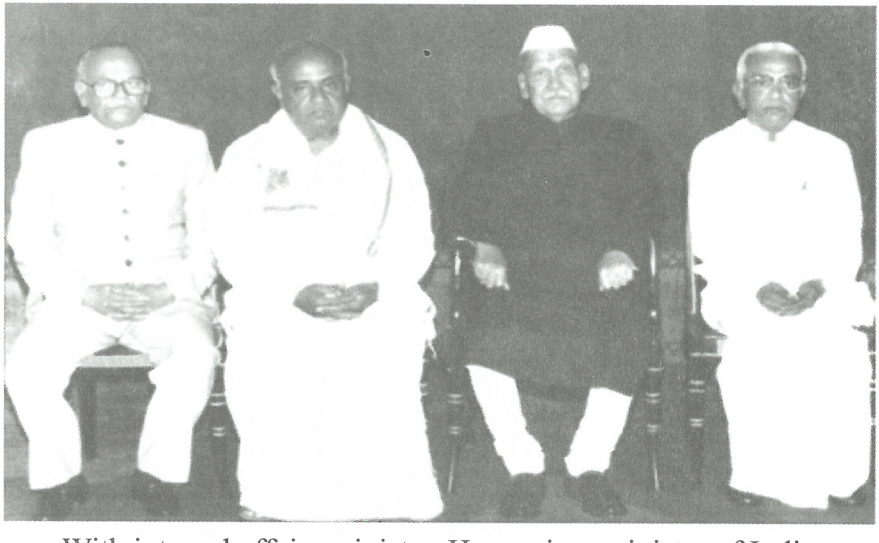
I have met Dr. Winoba Bawe twice. I met Hon. Jayaprakash Narayan in all two occasions he visited Sri Lanka. After the arrival of the president of India, we stood for the national anthem of India. When the welcome speech was over, I was awarded the Gandhi Peace Prize by Indian president Mr. Shankar Dayal Sharma.

Hon. prime minister of India Mr. H. D. Dave Gauda, Vice president K. R. Narayan, opposition leader Hon A. V. Vajjai, leader of Indian Congress Mrs. Sonia Gandhi, chief justice of India, ministers, members of parliaments and ambassadors were present. For reasons unknown, ambassador for Sri Lanka was not to be seen.

With Indian President Hon Shanker Dayalal



Receiving Gandhi Peace Award



With internal affairs minister, Hon. prime minister of India
Mr. H. D. Dave Gauda and president Dr. Shankar

As guests of the Indian government, I and my wife, Neetha, my children Diyath, Sadeewa, Nimna and late Mr. Mahanama Senivirathne, participated in the ceremony.

I submitted a list of about 50 of my Indian friends for invitations. Almost all of them were present.

We departed Sri Lanka on the 29th December 1996, participated in the ceremony and returned to Sri Lanka on the 4th January 1997. Having attended the welcome ceremonies on the way at Gampaha and Avissawella, we arrived at home in late evening. Welcome ceremonies had been organized on the 10th of January at Bandaranayake memorial conference hall, and several areas in the country by our employees and people.

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Gandhi Peace Prize 1996

Acceptance Speech By Dr A T Ariyaratne
At the Award Ceremony held on
1st January 1997
at Rashtrapathi Bhavan, New Delhi

Your Excellency the President of India, Dr Shankar Dayal Sharma,
Your Excellency the Vice President of India, Dr K. R. Narayanan,
The Honourable Prime Minister of India, Shri H. D. Dev Gowda,
The Honourable Chief Justice of India,
The Honourable Leader of the Opposition, Shri A. B. Vajpayee,
The Honourable Ministers and Members of Parliament,
H. E. the High Commissioner for Sri Lanka in India,
Mr. Nareshwar Dayal,
H. E. the acting High Commissioner for Sri Lanka in India,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemes,

I thank you for your presence here. I bring you greetings from many thousands of my rural sisters and brothers in the Sarvodaya Movement of Sri Lanka, who are striving to follow the path of truth, non-violence and self-denial, as shown by great world teachers like the Buddha, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, Jesus Christ, Prophet Mohammed and Mahatma Gandhi. I bring you their greetings and blessings for peace in your minds, contentment in your hearts, good health and long life.

I thank very sincerely the Honourable Shri Dev Gowda, the Prime Minister of India, in and the members of the Jury and for selecting me to receive the Gandhi peace prize for the year 1996. I also thank all those friends from many parts of the world who have nominated me for this prestigious prize. This prize means much more to me than all the previous international awards and prizes which I have received, because it is given in the name of Mahatma Gandhi – and because it is given by India, which we in Sri Lanka have traditionally considered to be our own motherland. I accept this prize with all humility and with grateful thoughts towards all who helped me to awaken myself to the service of all beings.

I understand that when the Government of India instituted the Gandhi peace prize during Mahatma Gandhi's 125th Birth Anniversary Year, the Government wanted this to be the highest International Prize, India gives for those who contribute for peace in the world. By selecting an exemplary world statesman, His Excellency Dr Julius Nyerare, the much respected former President of Tanzania, as the first recipient of this prize in 1995 and then a humble village-level worker like myself in 1996, the jury has thrown open a challenging opportunity to encourage all those who strive to tread the Gandhian path of non-violence to peace and justice.

I do not consider this prize as a recognition given to me as an individual. It is more a reaffirmation of the conscience of mankind in whose innermost feelings and thoughts truth, non-violence and service to fellow beings are very much cherished. While I am receiving the Gandhi Peace Prize truly it is I who owe a debt to Gandhi.

Mahatma Gandhi left no problem untouched in human society, even though most of his time was taken for the freedom struggle. In the introduction to his Autobiography, he wrote "What I want to achieve, what I have been striving and pining to achieve these thirty years, is self-realization, to see God face to face, to attain Moksha." Everything he spoke, did, and experimented within his life from the spirituo-moral and cultural to the socio-economic and political field was directed towards this end of self-realization or what we in the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka call Total Personality Awakening.

The Gandhi Peace Prize that India Conferred on a Sri Lanka today is a continuation and reaffirment of millennia old affinity between our two countries, its peoples and cultures whose value systems originated from the same spiritual source. Therefore, my acceptance of this award is a life-long moral commitment on my part to strengthen further our bonds based on those common values for the greater good of our peoples and the global human community in general. I am reminded of the words of Sir D.B Jayatillake, patriot, eminent scholar, people's leader and later the first High commissioner for Sri Lanka in India, at the conclusion of Mahatma Gandhi's tour to Sri Lanka in November 1927. He said "The triumph of his tour was nothing but Ceylon's homage to the ideals of truth, non-violence and self-sacrifice,"

The real tribute we can pay to Gandhiji is to live and sacrifice ourselves for these ideals as he himself did. Outside of these ideals there is no future for our countries or for the human society in general.

India's Contribution:

Gandhiji visited Sri Lanka long before I was born. Our parents and elders vividly remembered his visit. He presided over the prize Giving at Mahinda college, Galle, where I studied, and addressed the students at Nalanda college, Galle, where I studied, and addressed the students at Nalanda College, Colombo, where I taught. Gandhiji in his 1927 tour covered the length and breadth of Sri Lanka from the deep South to the Central Hills and the North. Everywhere he went thousands of peoples of all communities and religious beliefs welcomed him, and warmly responded to his call to buy kadhi and liberally donate to alleviate the suffering of the poor in India at that time.

Though he repeatedly said that he came to Sri Lanka as a self-appointed representative of the dumb and starving millions of India, on behalf of Daridranarayan' in his speeches he spared no pains to implore all to work hard towards a spiritual revival, preserve cultures, cultivate simple life styles and live in harmony with one another and nature. Gandhiji had clearly expressed his thoughts at those receptions and meetings on most problems that our countries faced such as Indo-Sri Lanka relations, education, health and labour and envisaged a guideline for the future development of our countries.

We owe a debt of gratitude to Shri Mahadev Desai who wrote and published the book "With Gandhiji in Ceylon - A journal of the Tour" with authorized version of all important speeches. "On the cover page there is a quote by Gandhi, "Forge the link stronger - Gandhi," If only the leaders of both our countries who espoused the causes of various racial, religious or communal groups studies paid heed to Gandhiji's words as recorded in this small book not only could we have changed

the course of our sad recent history but we could also have progressed in all aspects of cultured life. We need not have witnessed the past distrusts, deep divisions, conflicts, bloodshed, terrorism, and uncertainties.

With, the excellent relations which exist between our two countries now, we can 'Forge the Link Stronger' not only using millennia-old spirituo-cultural roots but also using the communication technology that is at our disposal today, so that together with other countries in this part of the world, we are not only the economic force we are expected to be, but we are also a spiritual force for sustainable life on earth.

My generation of youngsters Knew very little about Gandhiji's teachings as that was not a part of our curriculum of studies. My interest in Gandhiji was kindled quite accidentally on February 1st 1948 when I saw a crowd of people in my village peeping into a local newspaper and crying aloud as if a great personal of national calamity had occurred. This scenario was sparked off by the banner headline news that Gandhiji had been assassinated. I too joined the crowd in its mourning.

This unforgettable experience as a mid-teenager made a lasting impact on my life and I started reading whatever material I could find written by him or about him. My Buddhist upbringing unsophisticated and community service minded parents and the village community, and perhaps even a karmic habit from past lives of identifying with and helping the poor, would have drawn me emotionally to the Gandhian fold at that young age.

While attending the high school, then the teachers' training college, and the university, I devoted myself not only to study and pass my examinations well but also to serve my village community, and then see and learn for myself the conditions under which the poorest, the powerless and the most neglected communities of my country lived in the backwoods of Sri Lanka. I remember with gratitude the guidance I received from an elderly friend who was familiar with what the government then called the backward communities. I must admit that while my heart was with these people at that time, I could not conceive of any non-violent way that the injustices they were subjected to could be rectified. Violent revolutionary methods seemed to be more promising to my youthful mind the I read about the revolutionary changes that were reported to be taking place in the former Soviet Union, People's Republic of China, Eastern Europe and others. I continued with my community service activities but I had no clear vision at that time which would guide me into the future.

In December 1957 I made my first trip to India. I traveled from Kanya Kumari to Sri Nagar and from Bombay to Calcutta. I made a second trip in December 1959 in the company of a fellow teacher Dharma Gunasinghe, who is still working with me, to Delhi, and was very fortunate to have had the opportunity of not only listening to, but personally talking with several founding fathers of modern India including the prime Minister Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, President Dr Rajendra Prasad, and Vice president Shri S. Radhakrishnan.

During the course of this trip I attended the International Conference of the New World Education Fellowship which was addressed by eminent India scholars. In a Lucid exposition of Gandhiji's concept of

post-independent Indian society, the famous educationist Dr G. Ramachandran, used the word SARVODAYA which immediately awakened in me the ideal for which I should live and dedicate my life.

Next I found my way to Acharya Vinoba Bhava who was on his Bhoodan Padayatra (Land Gift Mission) in punjab, and I walked with him for a couple of days. Having received his blessings, advice, and inspiration I returned to Sri Lanka with the firm determination. The Principal, the teachers, and students of Nalanda College, Colombo, were the first to join with me in this almost unachievable task.

All High commissioners for India in Sri lanka from Shri V. V. Giri, who later became the president of India, to the present incumbent Shri Nareswar Dayal, several successive Presidents and Prime Ministers of India, Governors of States and many other leaders gave me their encouragement and blessings from time to time whenever I visited India, Sri E. W. Aryanaykam and Shrimati Ashadevi Ariyanayakam, Shri Jayaprakash Naryan and Shrimathi Prabhawati Narayan, Dr. R. R. Divakar and several other Gandhian leaders visited us several times and gave us all encouragement during the formative years of the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka. On this occasion I gratefully remember them though they are no longer with us.

Sarvodaya Society:

Today, on 1st January 1997, India begins her 50th Anniversary year of independence. In a year from now Sri Lanka too would have completed fifty years of political independence. In another three years time all of us will see the dawn of the third millennium. So, I am sure that you will agree with me that this is an appropriate time for all of us

to dispassionately look in retrospect and reappraise by ourselves our successes and failures as independent and interdependent nations, closely allied peoples and related cultures.

Have the succeeding generations, institutions of governance, social and economic systerm, delivered the goods which were expected of them by our forefathers who sacrificed so much to liberate us from cultural, economic and political subjugation? If not what corrective measures should we take now? I leave these questions to be seriously considered by the leaders of our two countries by turning the searchlight into themselves and into the institutions they compete to control. Gandhiji always looked relentlessly for the trust regardless of what pain it cost, so too should we be brave emulating his spirit and do the same. I have a feeling that we would be able to find an answer by developing insights with help of Gandhiji's thoughts.

Honorable the Prime Minister, in your Excellency's letter informing me that I had been selected to receive the Gandhi Peace Prize for 1996 an emphasis was made on certain criteria that qualified me to be selected to receive this prize. Some of these criteria were,

1. promoting Gandhian Values around the world.
2. Attempting to bring about social, economic and political transformation through Non-violence.
3. Applying Gandhiji's teachings to solve apparently unresolvable problems around the world.
4. Working self-lessly for peace and non-violence.
5. Amelioration of human suffering particularly of the less privileged sections of society, thereby contributing towards social justice and

peace. This is, indeed, a summation of what my colleagues and I have been attempting to do for nearly the last four decades. Therefore, I consider it my duty on this auspicious occasion, even very briefly, to describe the ideological, institutional, and practical programmes and processes, which we are releasing for the betterment of our human society.

I believe that globalization of the commodity markets alone, as is taking place today at an increasing pace, does not bring humanity closer to peace and justice. On the contrary it may result in fiercer competitiveness which will lead to more violence and injustices. More certainly will a global transformation of human consciousness, as Lord Buddha and Mahatma Gandhi conceived, serve to bring humanity closer to peace and justice. But Gandhiji was also aware of structural violence, which is now oppressing the masses of poor people around the word. It is this structural violence that we must tackle non-violently. Metta or loving kindness towards all sentient beings is at the core of spiritual consciousness which can transform global human relationships so that they are based on non-violence in thought, word, and deed.

What does this mean? Every human being whatever his vocation should be reminded of the need to have a spiritual ideal for self-relization. Self-realization is suspreme happiness whatever terminology we may use to describe it. Once we set about steadfastly treading the path to self-realization, like the noble eight fold path shown by the Buddha, we begin to experience the joy of living whatever sufferings and difficulties we have to bear in following such a path. There can be no spiritual ideal if lacks loving kindness towards

all and non-violence in one's thought, word and deep. The ideal society such individuals would conceive of, therefore, will be a society where the well being of all is assured and plenty of scope is provided for the personality Awakening of All. Gandhiji named such a society as a Sarvodaya Society. What I have dedicated my life for is to build a Sarvodaya Society in my country and the world.

Sarvodaya, for the individual is Total personality Awakening or Purna Paurushodaya. Sarvodaya for the family is Total Family Awakening or Kutumbodaya. Sarvodaya for the village is Total Village Awakening/Village self-government or Gramodaya/Grama Swarajya. Sarvodaya for the urban communities is Nagarodaya/ Nagaraswarajya. Sarvodaya for the national community is Deshodaya. Sarvodaya for the world community is Vishvodaya. Our objective is to release non-violent constructive processes that lead to development, peace and justice at all these six levels.

How did we set about to do this? We went among the most underprivileged communities and we requested them to co-operate with us to awaken our personalities by allowing us to live with them for a few days to share our thoughts, efforts, skills and whatever other resources we would bring with us. We had them select and discuss a useful task to be performed with them, which would satisfy a felt-need of the community. Together we planned the exercise in such a way that everyone felt that he or she is engaged in the noblest task that any human being can conceive of building a truly human society even for a few days where nothing but the best in them manifested itself. Volunteers from outside, and men, women, and children from the village would all live together, work up together, sing and dance together, and learn from one another without being formally taught.

There is something more than road building, construction of irrigation tanks and canals happening in these camps, something more than even what is now called human resource development. A continuing process of human personality awakening is released in this initial activity in the village. We call this activity spiritual and psychological infra-structure building.

In human society at all levels four inter-related vicious processes operate, the Buddha named them as psychological alienation (Chanda), aversion (Dwesha), fear (Bhaya) and delusion (Moha). The underlying factors for such alienation may be caste, religious, recial, linguistic, political, class, colour, or other divisions. In a Sarvodaya Shramadana Camp, on the other hand, these divisive factors do not surface themselves. Instead, respect for life, tolerance of all cultural and other differences, compassionate service, and the joy one gets out of such selfless service and equanimity prevail. Sharing, pleasant language, constructive activities and equality in association supplement these processes. An entirely different kind of psychological security and mutuality founded on spiritual awakening emerges in the participant-beneficiaries. A natural process of internalization of human duties and rights into our personalties taken place.

From the inception of the Movement to this day. such camps are held in all parts of the country. Thousands of people have participated from our country and hundreds of people from around the world in these camps. Quite apart from the material benefits village communities get from this activity, which of course is the only aspect that the economists notice, is the revolutionary significance of this activity in

the social transformation process. This is what we wish to emphasize. Any economic programme can temporarily boost the financial gains of impoverished people, but only through self empowerment do the financial gains bring about a long term positive effect. As an example we have recently initiated a new programme, the Sarvodaya Development Banks, which are being established in the advanced villages with people's own savings, and under their own trained managers, most of whom are young women. They are also provided with appropriate technical know how and knowledge about how markets work in the existing national and international system.

Man-made difference fall into insignificance and disappear in the psychology of people with this kind of integrated development processes occupy their minds and begin to show concrete results. They ate drawn closer to the ideal of One World One people. [Besides the explained positive effects, a great number of local and international movements have flowered from this work. For example, a group of japanese came to Sarvodaya, and participated in Shramadanaa. They returned to their country to found the 'One World One People Society movements in Japan, Korea, Korea, Bangladesh, Nepal and Tamil Nadu from the Sri Lanka experience. In the same way a group im San Diego, in the United States formed what they called the Beloved Community. Other in the United States, Belgium, Netherlands, Germany and elsewhere accepted the word, "Sarvodaya" itself for their societies. Then there are other Movements with similar ideals around the world. They all add to the formation of a critical mass of spiritual and psychological consciousness at the global level by promoting the Sarvodaya ideas and practices in their own environment.

A Sarvodaya village community enters the second phase of its awakening by the formation of various groups, such as pre-school children, children of school going age, youths, mothers, farmers, craftsmen and son on. These groups try to relate themselves to basic human needs, namely the need for a healthy environment, clean drinking water, nutrition, health, housing, communication, energy requirements, education and cultural and spiritual needs.

They have developed a portfolio of activities which they can carry out with self-reliance, community participation and grassroots planning. Going through evolutionary stages, and training their functional leaders in Sarvodaya Development Educational Institutions spread throughout the country, these communities organize themselves into village-level societies which give them an institutional framework managed by their own elected executive committees like panchayats in India.

Over the last four decades our Movement has succeeded in helping 11,300 villages out of an estimated 25,000 villages in the country to organize themselves into village societies. Those societies that have reached what we call fourth and fifth stages of village awakening are classified as Pioneering Villages, and each of them gives leadership and guidance to four Intermediate villages and five peripheral villages to reach higher levels of particpatory development. Thus ten villages are working together as a cluster.

We believe that when the thousand clusters in which we already work progress successfully and gather sufficient momentum that would greatly facilitate the launching of alternative political and economic

processes nationwide by the government as well as by civic organisations.

In addition to spiritual, moral, and cultural awakening, very clearly worked out and proven social, technological and economic empowerment programmes are carried out in these villages. This kind of bottom-up and lateral awakening of villages is what Gandhiji believed could expand globally in 'oceanic circles' . Nobody in the village is left out in such processes which are also capable of global expansion.

The physically and mentally handicapped, malnourished and orphaned, socially discriminated against and oppressed, displaced and refugees, (for whatever man-made or natural reason they fell into that category), along with normal villagers can find ways of becoming participant-beneficiaries in this alternative approach to development.

Peacemaking from Below

As the Gandhi Peace Prize winner a few comments from me on the conflict situation in Sri Lanka may be in order. We all know that the government forces and the rebel forces of the LTTE have been engaged in a bloody and costly war for well over a decade. At another there is also a search for a negotiated political settlement to the conflict that is taking place with both high level governmental and international initiatives for peace. The entire thinking is limited to a 'Political Solution' and a military initiative'. It appears that beyond considering the 'political solution' and a 'military initiative' and supporting the 'military initiative', people and peoples' movements like Sarvodaya have apparently no role to play.

Unlike in the past where conflicts were between sovereign states and where the Heads of States could negotiate as persons of equal status with one another, the present conflicts are mostly within national boundaries between unequals, whether in Sri Lanka or Chechnya. These wars are conducted in jungles and the mountains with rebel groups whose strength lies in their tactics of guerilla warfare and in the alienation of the conflict-affectef populations. In such situations the model of state-to-satate diplomacy conducted formally in the capitals of states, with high public visibility and with little flexibility, loses much of its relevance to resolving the problem. In addition, the pyramidal forms of top-down political and economic structures which different high level groups try to monopolise, lead to a whipping up of ethnic and other differences among the communities.

the people with whom the Sarvodaya Movement has been working with for nearly four decades are those at the community or grassroots level. They are the biggest losers from war and conflict, both in terms of lost economic opportunities and in lives sacrificed in the war effort. At the three most recent elections held in the country the people voted in large majorities for political parties with a peace platform. But reality is that the people are without the power to convert their desires into reality.

What Sarvodaya is attempting to do is to increase the space available for the people to participate in a lasting peace process without peacemaking remaining a monopoly of a few privileged groups circumscribed by their limited concept of peace. However, the financial, logistical, legal and other material support is hardly adequate for people's movements compared to the resources available

for the other two processes of war and high level negotiations. Despite these drawbacks Sarvodaya is engaged in a programme of mobilisation of the religious, business and educational sectors. It is our belief that middle range leaders, with their networks both upwards and downwards, can play a crucial people-based role in promoting and re-invigorating the peace process. Of course, our contribution can be more effective and bring tangible results if our role is recognized as valuable by the conflicting parties. But regardless of recognition and support, we continue ceaselessly with our peace building work.

After more than 13 years of war and several breakdowns in the peace process, it is clear that significant mistrust exists between the Sri Lankan Government and the LTTE. It is in the context of the acute mistrust and breakdown of communication between the two conflicting parties that the Sarvodaya Movement has taken its people-based approach to conflict resolution. We recognise that the resolution of our war cannot be left to either the politicians or to the military commanders alone. Making peace calls for a realistic assessment of ground realities, increasing the awareness of people at the grassroots and generating in them a sympathetic feeling for the sufferings of others is one part of changing those ground realities.

With its presence in nearly half of Sri Lanka's village communities, Sarvodaya has taken the initiative in promoting Sinhala-Tamil-Muslim village exchange programmes, whereby youth from the different communities engage in constructive activities for long periods as honourary members of other villages. Multi-ethnic and Multi-religious peace marches and peace meditations in which hundreds of thousands of people have participated, conflict resolution

training for Buddhist clergy and Tamil and Muslim community leaders, and joining in the peace activities of other organizations are some of the other ways in which Sarvodaya has tried to promote people-based peacemaking.

Events in Sri Lanka and elsewhere indicate that our world is faced with numerous problems ranging from abject poverty, terminal diseases, ethnic conflicts, sex-crimes inflicted on children and women, and drug addiction to global environmental pollution, political violence, civil wars, terrorism and large-scale corruption. All these evils are inter-related and they are caused by equally inter-related factors. Our existing national and international systems of governance, economic development and peace making seem to have lost their grip in dealing with these evils. Therefore, most of the people who control or try to control these systems are incapable of dealing with them effectively. Very few realize that it is not their fault but it arises from the inherent nature of the outdated systems of party and power politics and related economic and bureaucratic instruments. This has left them in the pathetic situation of looking after their existing vested interests, attacking one another, and making feeble and superficial gestures at solving problems. It is nothing more than pulling, pushing and fighting for the most comfortable seats in a ship knowing very well that the ship has a big hole and is fast sinking with all of them on board.

We may take courage from what Gandhiji wrote to Shri Nehru more than a half century ago.

> "I must not fear if the world today is going the wrong way. It may be that India too will go that way and like the proverbial

moth burn itself eventually in the flame around which it dances more and more furiously. But it is my bounden duty up to my last breath to try to protect India and through India the entire world from such a doom. The essence of what I have said is that man should rest content with what are his real needs and become self-sufficient. If he does not have this control he cannot save himself. After all the world is made up of individuals just as it is the drops that constitute the ocean."

The earth ship is in serious danger. Gandhiji showed a way to seal the hole and save the ship. We in Sarvodaya are applying his prescription with modifications to suit the changing times and climes. The Gandhi peace prize is such a great encouragement to us we will now work harder and faster. Please give us your continued support not only for the work we are now doing in Sri Lanka and in many other countries as well but also to unfold a Global Vision which be Asia's contribution to the 21st Century.

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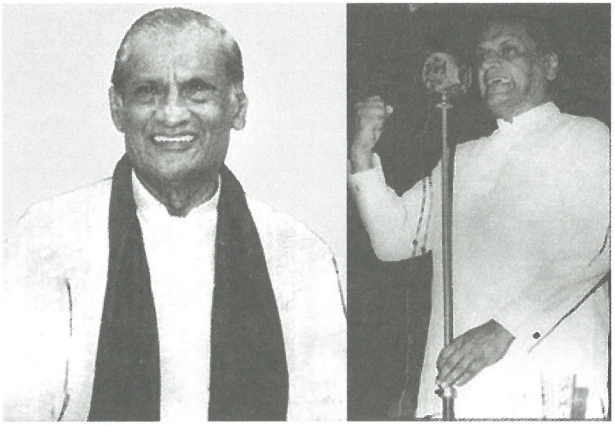
500 Acres for Tanamalwila Farm
Late Hector Kobbekaduwa

I would like to say a few words in thanks about Hon. Hector Kobbekaduwa who passed away recently in 1997. The same way people value the bold decisions he took regarding land reclamation, we at Sarvodaya too, commemorate him with special honour for the favour.

It was late land minister Hector Kobbekaduwa who bravely made arrangements to provide 500 acres to the Thanamalwila Farm. The important fact about this transaction was that he did this amidst a strict resistance of a powerful minister who was against us in that era. Various development works going on at Thanamalwila agricultural complex today reflects the outcome of his righteous action.



Mr. Hector Kobbekaduwa

He was a brave, straightforward and matured politician whose humble, constructive service in urban, national and political fields is ever commendable. The amount of votes he got in the presidential election confirmed it. People in the north and south equally respected him.

Even before being nominated as the presidential candidate, he came to Sarvodaya and said that activities of Sarvodaya deserved the attention of everybody, and not stating anything political in that occasion, highlighted his humble disposition.

I vividly remember how he invited us to lunch once and sought our opinion over the land reformation act he was about to present in parliament.

Hon. Hector Kobbekaduwa is a moderate example of a person whose services to humanity is still being admired after his demise. We at Sarvodaya always value human qualities as we serve the people.

May wish Mr. Kobbekaduwa attain Nibbana.

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Miracles of a Saint

On the 28th of February 1999 we all were extremely busy organizing the opening ceremony of 'Vishwa Nikethana' international peace home. The chairman of Thaiwan Buddhist Association Ven. Huan Tsin was invited as the chief guest. Apart from this, an international conference had been organized at our headquarters form the 1st of March, under the leadership of Mr. Sulak Shiwarashka of Thailand.

About a week ago, the founder of Mithra Nikethan in Kairale K. Vishvanadan contacted me over the telephone from a location called "Shanthigiri", and said that they built a mansion named "Sahakarana Mandira" to be dedicated to Guru Karunakara, who is one of the greatest saints in present-day India; the opening ceremony of which is scheduled on 1st of March morning, and that my name has been proposed by the Guru as the chief guest. Furthermore, he asked if I were in a position to attend. I politely explained that I will never be able to attend on reasons that I was scheduled to open an international conference at noon on the same date, and that I had to attend the opening ceremony of the Vishwa Nikethan complex on the following day.

Mr. Vishwanath informed this to Guru and the committee. But he failed to change the determination of Guru. He summoned his young follower and international businessman Mr. Herbi Siddhi and ordered him to fly to Sri Lanka immediately, go to my house and never leave until I agree to come with him for the ceremony.

Soon after, one morning, when I was about to leave home, a handsome young man with a pleasant personality arrived in a vehicle and introduced himself. I took him to my house and gave him accommodation in the verandah room. He explained all about Guru Kaunakara. He said we can depart from Katunayake on the morning of the 1st of March, arrive in Thrivendram, attend the ceremony, leave Thrivendram at 12.40 hours and arrive in Sri Lanka the same day for the conference. He also said that they had reserved seats for another three persons of whom he needed confirmation for and their details immediately.

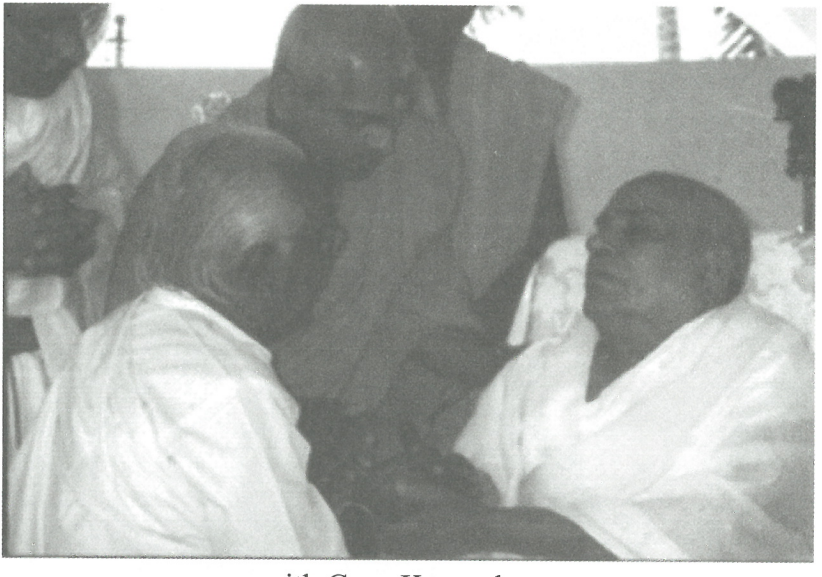
I, Nimna and Janantha with Mr. Herb Siddu

I expressed my doubtfulness at returning in time since both Air Lanka and Indian Air Lines generally does not fly on time. And he did say that Guru Kaunakara will definitely make sure that the flights will be on time that day.

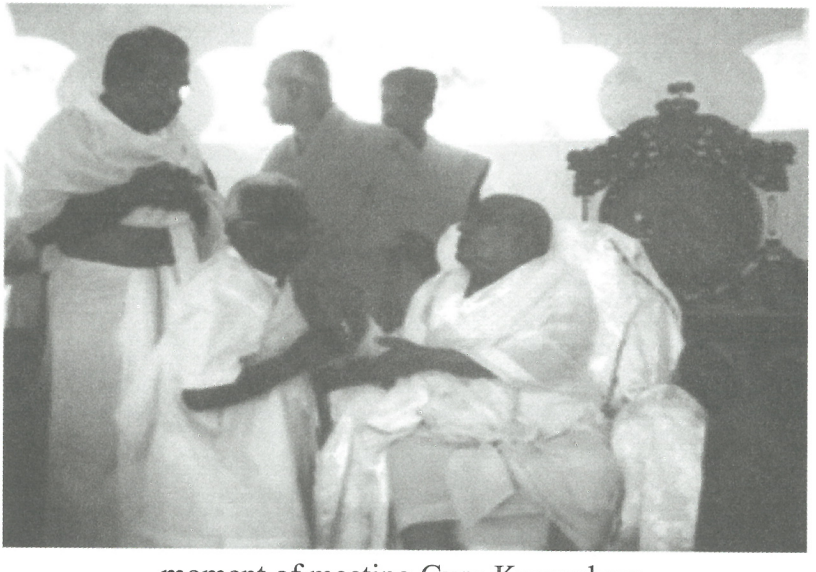
Then there was nothing else I could do other than accept the invitation. I felt the energy of Guru Karunakara. Along with Susiri, Nimna and Jayantha exactly at 0700hrs on the 1st of March I departed from Katunayake Airport to Thrivendram. Without any delay Siddu and other followers took us to Shanthigiri monastery in just 45 minutes. I, having a sarong wrapped over my trousers, went to see Guru Karunakara. Guru Karunakara welcomed me, holding both of my hands among over forty thousand followers clad in white. Holding my hand, he directed us to the newly built Sahakarana mansion saying "let us start the ceremony as you don't have much time". A devotee presented many valuable items to Guru. Having accepted them, he started his speech. Then he invited me to deliver a speech. In my speech, I discussed about student- teacher tradition, and the necessity in our mind to create a student-teacher generation for peace in society and environment by which we could gain a spiritual awakening in India and the whole world. After my speech, Guru Karunakara, having instructed others to continue the ceremony, fetched me to his chamber by holding my hand.

Having blessed me, Guru instructed the organizer to take us to the airport immediately. We bowed to the Guru, and in a flight on time arrived in Katunayake by 12.30 hrs and reached home by 14.00 hrs.

Making a speech at the opening ceremony of Sahakarana mansion



with Guru Karunakara



moment of meeting Guru Karunakara

I realized that this was actually a miracle only a saint could do. Those two hours in Shanthigiri monastery seemed a dream. From that moment Guru Karunakara was on my mind during every spiritual act I was involved in. After exactly 66 days of my meeting him that is on the 6th May, Guru Karunakara passed away.

* * *

To Shanthigiri Monastry Again

I explained above of our half-day miracle visit to the opening ceremony of Sahakarana Mandir in India and about the demise of Guru Karunakara after exactly 66 days following our visit.

Hindu followers believe that Guru transcended to the highest place in heaven, and from where he is, in the form of new "Oli", he transmits in a trance his immaculate knowledge of wisdom and instructions to his followers through his chief Nun Hon. Amritha Janani.

Mr. Herbi Siddu, who first fetched me to Shanthagiri monastery, personally handed over an invitation for Guru Karunakara's 3rd Memorial Day. It was apparently sent to me by Jothi Guru Karunakara from heaven through chief Nun Janani. I accepted the invitation, and with Ven. Moratuwa Saddawamsa Thero and Mr. Arjun Krishnarathna arrived at Madurasi on the 1st. After a two hour journey from Trichi, we stayed overnight, and after a 7 hour journey by car we reached Shanthigiri monastery, again. We were warmly welcome by Chairman of Benefactors' Council Guru Baktan, Swami Chaithanya and other celibate anchorites.

At Shanthigiri Monastry

Guru had instructed from "heaven" through Nun Janani to warmly welcome me with the highest hospitality, and to hold the memorial ceremony at the main park in Thiruvanatapuram city under my leadership on the 5th of May. The task of providing hospitality to us had been assigned to Mr. Subramaniam who was a bank manager. His assistant was a young man called Biju. We participated in night time oblations and meditation sessions. I was summoned to meet chief Nun Janani on the 3rd. She lived in a chamber near to the chamber of late Guru Karunakara. There were plenty of nuns around her clad in yellow robe exposing only the face. Chief disciple Honoured Nun Amritha Janani summoned me to her, bowed while closing her eyes and resting her palms on her chest, and ask us to sit on the chairs provided. Apart from the three of us, 85 year-old Mr. Pathma Vibushana Maulana Vahiudeel Khan, the chairman of the famous Islamic Centre of India, and his daughter were siting with us.

After sharing a few philosophical points with all of us, she said all others except us could leave.

Then she said that she inquired about me from the late Guru, and according to him I did not need any major treatment like 'panchakarma', and therefore she prescribed some general medicine for supplying of which she had already instructed doctor Swami of medicine hall. Explaining the present state of Guru, she said the tradition of student-teacher generation is being well restored, and that devotees of Shanthigiri are setting up small monasteries in India and abroad.

She informed that I will be summoned several more times during my stay. Also she advised me to offer Sri Vibuthi and other sweets, cashews, and consume them.

On the 3rd, 4th, and 5th mornings we spent time participating in various offerings and oblations, to meet Janani twice and to share our opinions on a variety of topics with various chief priests in the monastery. We also visited the ayurvedic hospital and the ayurvedic medicine production plant producing over 4000 medicines with a workforce of 1500 employees.

The main ceremony was held on the 5th afternoon which was organized in Thiruwanathapuram. Devotees travelled to the ceremonial ground in a two mile long Guru-worshipping procession consisting of two parallel rows of male and female devotees. The laymen or laic devotees were in white clothes, Brahman in white sarong and half-shouldered upper cloth, and ascetics or nuns and priests were clad in

yellow robe. They were holding various items like flags and parasols. The streets were beautifully decorated.

We and other chief ascetics were taken to the ceremony in two vehicles.

All who came in the procession were chanting,

Om shri karunakara guru parabrahmneya namaha
Om shri karunakara guru sathya prakasha namaha
Om shri karunakara guru adiwa sathya prakasha namaha ///

The procession reached the ground after one and a half hours delay. Janani reached the stage escorted by a large group of nuns. All bowed to her on their knees. She left the stage after a 15 minute speech. Two lorry loads of polished granite were brought closer to the stage. Janani accepted them and offered flowers. Then we all offered flowers to the large flowerbed on the lorry.

By now there were over 10,000 devotees in front of the stage. I and Mr. Maulana Wahiudil were summoned to the stage. After the welcome speech, I delivered my 40 minute speech as the chief guest. Malayali translation of the summary of my speech was presented by a woman. After my speech, Mr. Maulana Wahiudil, election commissioner of Kerala, and other high ranking officers made their speeches. After the conclusion of ceremony at about 09:30pm, we had a Masala Thosai with Mr. Subramaniam in a restaurant. Afterwards we went back to our rooms.

On the following morning we went to see Mithra Nikethan along with Mr. Siddu, conducted a lecture to teachers and students there, had lunch at Mr. Vishvanathan's residence, and returned to the monastery.

In the evening the monastery was crowded to the fullest since thousands of followers with water pots, colourfully decorated flowers and rice calmly reached the Sahakarana Mansion. It was midnight when all finished reaching the mansion. This festival is known as the Kimbakarana festival.

As we had to meet Janani early in the morning and then reach the airport, we went to bed.

At about 06:30 in the morning Janani, having shared many personal facts, made me understand the importance of working together and helping each other because like Sarvodaya, they too devoted themselves to the achievement of spiritual revitalization. She offered us three food packs with Guru blessing. We said goodbye to Janani. Siddu dropped us at the airport. We arrived at Katunayake at about 11:30 hrs.

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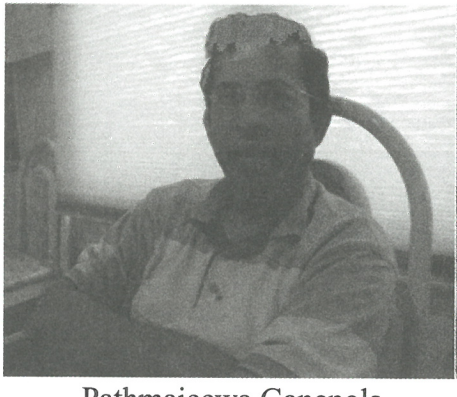
Jiwa and Manel

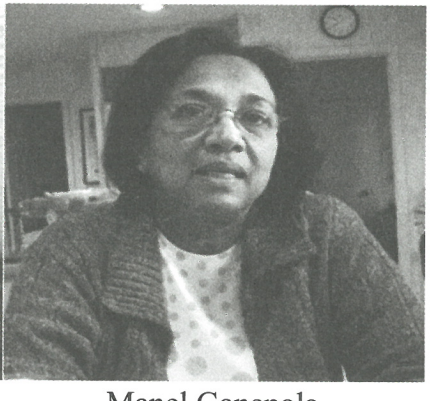
I consider my work as a teacher in a famed school like Nalanda a privilege to my life. The best I achieved in my two decades of service at Nalanda was the bunch of students, whom I taught, who became nationally and internationally famous, important and influential figures.

I was even blessed to enjoy the hospitality of few of them. Each time I visited New York, Washington, Boston and other estates in the east of America, a place where I stay and rest as though it was my own home is the house of my dear Jiwa Ganepola's home situated at 64, Alpine Terrace, Hillsdale, New Jersey, about 40 miles from New York.

His full name is Ganepola Arachige Padmajiwa Ganepola. We used to call him Jiwa from his childhood. He was born in Galle, Sri Lanka.



Pathmajeewa Ganepola



Manel Ganepola

His father served as a school inspector and later as a director of the department of education. Those days they resided in Rajagiriya. I remember to date how this adorable, thin fellow, clad in white trousers and shirt with hair neatly combed to the side sat in the Grades 9 to 10 classes in Nalanda.

His effort to launch a rocket from Camble Park along with fellow students was reported by all newspapers in the island. Jiwa, who displayed such talents as a student is a citizen of USA today.

They have been living in this house for about 40 years now. Their only daughter Sauri is married and with her husband, works in a financial institute in New York. Jiwa's wife, Maneldevi Senevirathne is a child of the famous Senivirathne family of Aththanagalle. Her father was a landlord and a politician who was brave enough to contest even against Prime Minister S. W. R. D Bandaranayake in that era. I knew Manel and her father from those days.

They are always looking forward to warmly welcoming me, having filled their cupboards and fridge with vegetarian food, from the very instance they hear the news that I will visit America. Two rooms are always assigned exclusively for me and Krishna in their beautiful mansion.

Jiwa is the medical director of the Valley hospital in New Jersey. He is the head of the American Cancer Institute. He also works as a professor/surgeon in New York.

After completing studies at Nalanda, he entered Tokyo University in Japan and enrolled in higher studies from 1961 to 1963. After

becoming a surgeon, he completed further studies while serving as a surgeon in several universities and hospitals in the USA. He often attends medical conferences as a lecturer locally and internationally. Having connections with Peradeniya and Colombo universities for three decades, he has been involved in many complicated medical operations in Sri Lanka. He worked hard to uplift the quality of young Sri Lankan doctors through conferences and workshops.

He deserves the honour in manipulation of the opinion of congress and public in favour of Sri Lanka. After the 1983 riots in Sri Lanka, LTTE launched a gigantic propaganda campaign all over America against Sri Lanka, the climax of which was the opposition leader Amirthalingam protest in congress against American aids to Sri Lanka. No one came forward to protect the image of Sri Lanka at that time. Jiwa travelled to every city and motivated the Sri Lankan community to work towards a powerful campaign against the baseless allegations of Tamil Diaspora. Amirthalingam failed to establish anything against Jiwa's arguments during the congress committee inquiry. As a result, America became the first country in the world that listed LTTE as a terrorist organization.

As a past student of Nalanda he established a scholarship program in 1975. Last year he came to Sri Lanka to help set up a Chinese language learning centre. He also donated a large telescope to the astronomy society of Nalanda college.

When writing about Jiwa you cannot avoid talking about his beloved wife Manel. She is always by Jiwa like his shadow. She is the one who looks after all my needs during my stay in her house. As a permanent resident for over 39 years, she knows every corner of this city. She is

an accomplished artist. Her works are displayed at every suitable position insde her neatly maintained, beautiful house. The majority of her time is spent among flower beds of her beautifully landscaped garden. She considers offering hospitality to friends a hobby. Her laughs brings life not only to her house but also to the whole neighbourhood. Hearing her laughs make me feel as though I were living in a beautiful, humble countryside in Sri Lanka.

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Ever Friendly Dr. Leel Gunesekara

I first met Dr. Leel Gunesekera in 1961 in a shramadana camp to clean the sacred city of Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka. It was a normal practice to conduct a lecture of a scholar in the daily 'Paul Hamuwa' or meeting of families held in every morning, noon and night in all our camps and centres: a tradition unique to Sarvodaya. I invited the then deputy government agent Dr. Leel Gunesekera to do a lecture on Anuradhapura Culture. He conducted the lecture to the satisfaction of all.

Dr. Leel Gunesekara

Mr Leel Gunesekara at a gathering of Sarvodaya

Our connection from that day is going on to date, for over five decades. As the then government agent in Kaluthara he organized a grand welcome ceremony for me in Kaluthara when I came to Sri Lanka with the Magsaysay award. He was always with us and helping when we conducted several Shramadana camps in the Kegale district in that era.

Whenever the World Organization requested a representative from Sarvodaya I could send him as our representative. I remember sending him as our representative to a conference in Culcatta.

Once he served in Chandriga in India as the director of United Nations Asian Youth Training Institute. I went to Chandriga three times on his invitation. Later he served in Bangkok attached to UNESCO.

Serving as the director of cultural affairs, and the director of social services, he travelled abroad on official matters. I remember the few diverting days spent together in Pakistan when he came along with the minister of social services for a world social welfare services conference. I also remember how we both, with few others, joyfully travelled around China.

Leel Gunesekera is an accomplished writer who wrote several novels, inclusive of award-winning novels "Pethsama" and "Athsana". He held higher positions in several organizations in Sri Lanka inclusive of Sarvodaya. You can travel hundreds of miles with Leel without fatigue as he had endless stories and experiences to share with delightful humour.

The demise of his wife, who was a teacher in Visaka College, was unbearable to him. She was a charitable person who was always prepared to offer her hospitality to her friends. One of his daughters is a lecturer in the University of Peradeniya. His other daughter is married and works in England.

I consider Leel a grateful great friend who always commended commendable acts and discarded disagreeable acts, with his subtle sense of humour.

I thought it was appropriate to include here the speech done by Leel at the national council of Deshodaya of Sarvodaya held on the 20th 22nd and 23rd of August 2010, since it included information about the history of our relationship:

At an international Conference in China

* * *

"Mr A. T. Ariyaratne, the leader of Sarvodaya, came to Aunuradhapura in 1961 along with a group of about 1000 young people for a two week shramadana program to cleanse the holy town. As deputy government agent, it was my duty to welcome and provide for them. Mr. Ariyaratne invited me to conduct a speech, under a subject I desired, at that night's Pawul Hamuwa. The subject I selected was the ancient prosperity of Anuradhapura, the Holy City. The speech caught the attention of all and I was invited to make two more speeches. There arose excitement and enthusiasm in the sacred history of Anuradhapura, and this response and closeness and consequent invitation of Dr. Ariyaratna to join Sarvodaya was the foundation for my everlasting bond with Sarvodaya.

What I intended with this introduction was to admire the distinguished endeavour of world renowned Mr. A. T. Ariyaratne to restore the prosperity of this country by uplifting the personality of people, and to humbly talk about my contribution to such an endeavour as a person and a public servant. I am pleased with the services I have provided to Sarvodaya to date. My concepts and thinking were shaped by the influence of Sarvodaya.

There are 6 objectives of Sarvodaya connected with Paurushodaya, Kutumbodhaya, Gramodaya Deshodaya, and Vishvodaya. In order to achieve these objectives, I followed Sarvodaya procedures and ways in district and central government administration, and in various international affairs abroad. In all my transactions in ministries of social services, cultural, youth affairs, educational, administrative and land, and all departments under them, and various voluntary services, I applied Sarvodaya procedures and policies. This is in fact extrinsic for cultured persons like us who were brought up in noble Sinhalese customs and formalities, following Buddhist observance, and values of our traditions and culture. The reason for this is because what is practised as the traditional foundation of Sarvodaya are Buddhist quadric policies named Metha, Karuna, Mudita, Upekka. It is the resolute foundation of personality practised by our people for centuries in accordance with the teachings of Lord Buddha. Cultivating these qualities, to live without being a burden to society, by providing counselling and training to thousands of rural and urban communities of Sarvodaya; development of self, development of one's family, development of village, development of city, development of country and finally development of world or Vishvodaya. Sometimes this can be seen as an Utopia, but Dr

Ariyaratne who converses about universal laws and energy influenced by truth and exemplar, has strict confidence in it. In fact, what is required by the world in this era is development mingled with peace and morality sought by Buddhism and other religions. Universal energy is central in finding solutions to chaotic calamities caused by war, use of drugs and consumption of liquor.

National Deshodaya Board of Sarvodaya has come up with following facts by analysing this problem:

1. Destruction of human life.
2. Birth of permanently disabled babies.
3. Breach of human rights.
4. Creation of social and economic crises.
5. Collapsing of normal life.
6. Harming of women and children.
7. Increment of activities of crime and misdeeds.
8. Forfeiture of philanthropic leaders.
9. Breakdown of civil social function.
10. Dysfunctional consequences brought upon social activities as a whole and upon democracy.

Next let us have a look at the long-standing traditional policies Sarvodaya adapts to eliminate or minimise these. They are the time-honoured, long-standing policies, based on dana, arthacharya, samanatmata researched and successfully implemented in Sri Lankan society for thousands of years. The gravity of urgency of the implementation of this system in the local context is well depicted by the disgraceful social conditions reported by media. Some seem to

think that we at Sarvodaya are playing blindfolded in the contemporary society with outdated procedures. However, there is something I must remind those modern development ideologists in this era where long standing traditional cultural values are eroded. Development is not just a snobbish, external material showcase. Here I would like to site what Ven. Anagarika Dharmapala said about this: "Shoes Glitter Man Perish". In accordance with lectures, writings and models of A. T. Ariyaratne-centered scholars, spiritual development is

In the 1970s Mr. Ariyaratne assigned me to attend various international conferences and lectures in western and eastern countries. Sometimes I used the opportunities for official needs as well. There is a particular fact I should mention here that I noted during my travels in Canada, United Kingdom and various countries in Europe and Asia. That is the instant they knew that I was a Sri Lankan, the first two things they inquired was about the first woman Prime Minister Mrs. Sirimawo Bandaranayake and about Mr. A. T. Ariyaratne of Sarvodaya. Foreign policy and connections with non-aligned movement of the then prime minister Mrs Bandaranayake and international popularity gained by Mr. A. T. Ariyaratne's Sarvodaya accounted for increased popularity and fame of our country in the international arena in that era. In fact, prior to the increased terrorist activities, being a Sri Lankan and bearing flourishing lotus flower symbol of Sarvodaya used to gain special attention and privilege in many air lines. Therefore, I should say that, the efforts and contribution of Sarvodaya from the 1950s in shaping the foreign policy of our country is valid to date.

To bring in prosperity to everyone spiritually and materially without any discrimination and with respect to humanity through the influence of Buddhism is the objective of Sarvodaya. Orientation of people for this from every 6 corners of Sri Lanka is the mission of Sarvodaya. It is quite clear that President Mahinda Rajapaksha is also following this policy in order to maintain virtue and development of a country effected by separatist terrorism. Here we remember few politicians of our era who used to admire and adapt the policies and procedures of Sarvodaya. Their conduct seem to be fairer than others. By a newspaper advertisement, ministry of administrative affairs had requested recently for proposals for the development of government services. To my knowledge I think the best thing for this is to provide knowledge about activities of Sarvodaya on the levels of policy and function to all those officials from bottom to top. It will largely help in local and foreign affairs. This will help us to update our conventional cultural ways in accordance with present science, technology and thinking, preserving dialectical touch.

I made use of the strategies of Sarvodaya on behalf of the government for the rehabilitation of over 20,000 youth caught in the 1971 uprising. Those strategies were extremely useful and effective to change the attitudes of officers at every level and training them toward the benefit of rehabilitation. British rehabilitation training expert Mr. Douglas Hide said that the key to the success story of Sri Lanka's rehabilitation program is the attitude change effectively implemented in high ranking officers of armed forces and the police. I shouldn't say how appropriate those Sarvodaya fundamentals have been to date. The foundation on which everyone who assisted in the rehabilitation process involved making sure they all were sensitive to human

feeling. I am utterly grateful to the government for giving me full freedom, money and assistance for the rehabilitation. As a result of it I became the director of youth affairs development in Asia pacific region of commonwealth. Accordingly, adapting and following fundamental procedures and ways of Sarvodaya I could be successful in implementing youth affairs policy planning, training and awareness research projects in the Asia Pacific region inclusive of Sri Lanka for years.

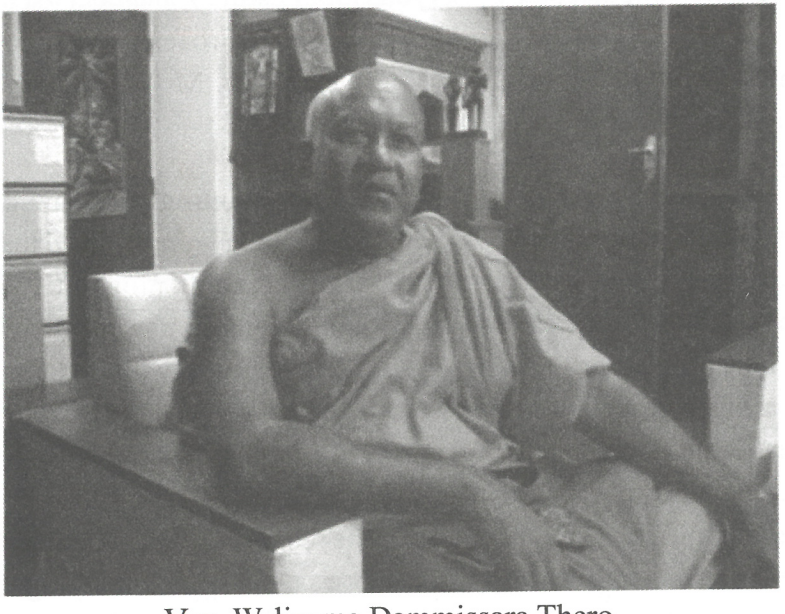
Dr. Ariyaratne was known from the highest to bottom of the hierarchy in many countries, and there were some who became confident through "Sarvodaya Vandana". In a way this is a step towards the shifting of our Deshodaya to Visvodaya. There is no one in this country as famous, popular and honoured as Dr. Ariyaratne in the field of development of the welfare of community. And it is my duty to declare that he is the only person in this country awarded with the highest number of international honours and awards by the heads of states and organizations in the world. Also it is exemplary to present Sarvodaya awards to those who excel in rendering services for the welfare of the community.

Therefore I thank you all, who came here from all corners of the country for Sarvodaya's Deshodaya movement which strives to guide divided communities towards united prosperity. I am sure that many will benefit from your endeavours to make this a success. I wish Dr Ariyaratne and all of you good luck"

From The Memories of Ven. Weligama Dhammassara

I passed GCE(O/L) examination in 1973. Then I entered Mahamanthinda Pirivena for advanced level studies in 1974. During that period Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement held a day long bikku conference in the pirivena hall.

The speech done by Mr. P. A. Kiriwandeniya caught my attention. In his speech he fluently described our national flag and the meanings of its symbols as a message to the nation. I believe his speech managed to fill the hearts of the audience with patriotism.



Ven. Waligama Dammissara Thero

The next speech that mesmerized me was the speech of the leader of Sarvodaya: Dr A. T. Ariyaratne. Presenting a valuable description of our history of Buddhism, Dr. Ariyaratne explained that what we should do today is not to copy our history but to update it for the new generation. And he pointed out that it was time for Ven. monks to use powers of their hereditary legacy to achieve this objective, by spreading the programs Sarvodaya had launched to make this mission a success. I thought: "isn't this Buddhism they try to spread within society by activating procedures to make what is in the Bana book practical under the name of Sarvodaya?" We were frozen and hypnotized during the whole speech which fluently explained a program with boundless value aimed at creating a cultured, charitable human being. After the conference, I participated in almost every program conducted by Sarvodaya. I still remember scholars participated in that conference. Ven. Professor Havanpola Rathanasara, Professor L. G. Hewage and Mr. M. W. Kurunananda were among them.

Then Sarvodaya started weekend bikku training program in the pirivena, and those who completed the training were directed to Meth Medura at Moratuwa for a week's resident training program. A group was selected to participate in rural shramadana camps in which I was included. We participated in all of those camps with delight since working with people increased the acquaintance of friends. Here I recall an unforgettable incident I faced in one of these camps. This particular camp was held in a far rural village of Urubokka away from kamburupitiya. One day during the camp, at the evening Pawl Hamuwa meeting I heard my name was announced, inviting me to make a speech addressing the crowd gathered. I was 19 years of age

then, and I had never conducted a speech through a microphone in front of such a large crowd, and this was an unexpected dilemma for me. I went to the microphone. Everyone was looking at me. There was no turning back. Shivering started at my fingertips and expanded to my whole body. I grabbed the pole of the microphone tight with both of my hands, closed my eyes and just kept saying what came to my mind. All seemed to be listening. The shivering in my body seemed to reduce. I released my right hand from the microphone, rested it on my hip and opened my eyes. I had done my speech! I gave full credit to myself for being successful in transforming the picture I had in my mind about lake, dagaba, village and temple into a speech. I thought the efforts to hide my shivering and nervousness did not get noticed. At night while on bed I was listening to what my fellow Theros had to say about the speech. "Good speech. Commendable" some said. "But he spoke too fast. He didn't hear us shouting: 'slow down!' from the last row" said others.

We participated in the monthly Sarvodaya programs not only in Matara district but also in Galle. Gradually increasing my contribution to Sarvodaya activities with delight, I managed to organize a sanga (Buddhist priests' conference) in Weligama, Rajamaha Temple. On the 24th September 1974 with the permission from the chief of our temple Ven. Patagama Sri Nandarama I successfully arranged a one-day sanga conference for provincial Buddhist priests. To date I feel pleased being able to hold such an important event successfully on behalf of my village at our temple. Introducing Sarvodaya to Weligama and increasing of village-level activities to the extent of appointing the coordinator depicts the level of its progress.

By 1975 I abandoned the idea of studying for GCE advanced level examination. That was because I got through the entry test of Buddha Srawaka Dharma Faculty of Anuradhapura. So I entered Anuradhapura Bukku University to do studies for my canonical degree. By 1978 we were third year students there. We were able to arrange a special lecture, inviting a lecturer extraneous to its staff which was consisting of 25 members. The then wise chancellor of that institute was Ven. Kodagoda Sri Knanaloka Thero. I managed to get the right permission to bring in an outside lecturer. The authority for the task was handed to be because of my position as the secretary of Sinhala section of General Student Council. On my way home for vacation I visited the Damsak Madura and invited Dr. A T. Ariyaratne for the lecture. Further, the auditorium of our university had never been used to show a film, and I decided to hold a showing of the Sarvodaya documentary film "Build a Road and Sustain from the Road". I should mention here the invaluable cooperation of fellow students I received to make this a success.

Built in 1967 to a concept of the then minister of cultural affairs I. M. R. A. Iriyagolle this university, without using the name "university" was originally a form of meditation centre for the highest ranking Buddhist clergy, and it seemed a kind of revolution to hold lectures by outside lecturers and show films in the premises, but we managed to do that by explaining things to the authorities with good faith.

The program that was initiated by showing a film later became a monthly event. Inviting the then government agent for Anuradhapura Mr. Amara Hewamadduma for a lecture and explaining our mission, we could obtain films for the program from the film corporation which

was under Mr. Hewamadduma. We started a branch office of Sarvodaya in a rented house in Anuradhapura. Mr. Harsha Kumara Nawarathne was appointed as the district leader. Several of us were involved in its activities from the inception in the city, villages and other districts. Ven. Kosgoda Suboothi and Ven. Tapowanaye Sugathadara Theros were two of the people, who were at the front line. That was a difficult task as Anuradhapura was the largest district with poor infrastructure with villages in the deep jungle.

However, what I liked most was to travel in brother Harsha's Jeep. He was a fast driver. I remember how he set a record by driving 12 of us to Trincomalee in just an hour to catch the government agent there on time. He was a young man talented in speech, and organization of activities. Mr. Harsha Kumara Nawarathne, who was the then in charge of North Central province, is today rendering an excellent service as the chairman of Lanka Seva Organization, and as an active member of the International Centre for Buddhist Activities.

The degree I was following in Anuradhapura was a 5 year program. We only get 3 months leave during the rainy season, and in the season of 1978, few of us as a group decided to go for studies at the Sarvodaya Bikku Training Institute at Pathakada, Rathnapura. We had an unquenchable thirst to learn complex Buddhist teachings from Ven. Henpitagedara Chanaseeha, who was the chief of the training institute. Apart from this there was the particular fact that I was striving to know from Ven. Henpitagedara, and that was the true story behind his conspiracy, along with the then Commander of Army general Richard Udugama, to overthrow Prime Minister Dudley Senanayake's government. By then Ven. Henpitagedara Thero and all

others involved had been cleared free from all charges, and the 24 books Ven. Henpitagedara wrote while in prison are highly valued as Buddhist classics. I consider Ven. Henpitagedara Thero as the only bikku who bravely criticized misinterpreted Buddhist teachings. That three months the 14 of us spent in Sarvodaya training centre learning, criticizing and debating Ven. Henpitagedara's debatable definitions of Buddhist teachings, was one of the most satisfactory and blissful periods of our lives.

Awarding ceremony of certificates for 150 students inclusive of us, who successfully completed the three month Bikku training program, was held in 1979 with the then prime minister R. Pramedasa as the chief guest. The speech made by Ven. Henpitagedara Thero filled the audience with laughter when he said " I have several more books to write, and I ask the authorities to send me back to prison as I am more productive there than outside".

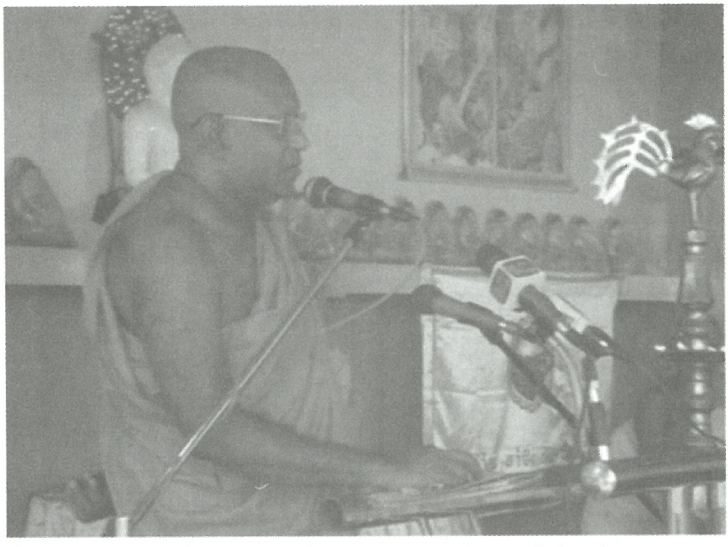
At the end of 1979 having successfully completed our degrees, we dispersed to destinations we had been assigned. Since I had been assigned to University of Kelaniya, I headed towards Colombo.

Above was the narration on his own words how Ven. Dammissara joined Sarvodaya.

Megoda Kolonnawa Senevirathnaramaya

The service Ven. Dammissara has done as the chief prelate of Senevirathnarama, Megoda, Kolonnawa and Wellampitiya is commendable. The Sthupa Ven. Dammissara built gaining contribution of everyone is visible for miles from all four corners. The small temple and pavilion is a place where both children and adults can gain help to improve their knowledge in Buddhist teaching. In 1986 Sarvodaya took the lead in the project to provide drinking water to every resident in the village. On 24th Nikini poya 2010, I attended a ceremony in honour of me there.

How Ven. Dammissara was involved in developing his temple and village, gaining help from Chief prelate of western province: Ven. Poththewela Vineetha Thero; Hon speaker Chamal Rajapaksa, minister of disaster management Hon A. H. M. Fowsi, minister of power and energy Hon. Patali Champika Ranawaka, Mr. Kalsuri Edvin Ariyadasa, Mrs Asoka Lanka and others, is highly commendable.



Ven Dammissara delivering welcome speech in the ceremony organized in honour of me

With speaker Chamal Rajapaksha and minister A H M Fawsi attending the ceremony

Hon Speaker presenting a souvenir

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Most Venerable Mapalagame Vipulasara Who Left us a Decade ago

2011 marks the decade of the passing away of great kalasoori: most venerable Mapalagama Vipulasara Thero, known to and venerated by Buddhists all over the world.

Mapalagama Vipulasara Thero

It was Professor G. P. Malalasekera who first recognized and admired talents of Ven. Vipulasara Thero. He introduced Ven. Vipulasara to Mr. J. D. A. Perera, the head of National Art Gallery, and enrolled him for three years in a course in art. The Sri Lankan government and people quickly recognized Vipulasara Thero's intrinsic artistic ability and skills. Name of Ven. Mapalagama Vipulasara became indelible in Sri Lankan Buddhist culture. Editor D. B. Danapala introduced Ven. Mapalagama to the Sri Lankan public by running an article by veteran journalist Piyal Wickramasinha under the heading: "Little Thero Who Does Gigantic Work".

Ven. Mapalagama Vipulasara was born in Mapalagama village in Gangabada Pattuwa in the district of Galle on the 3rd of March, 1925. He became a Buddhist monk on the 14th of July, 1940. He attained ordination on the 18th of February, 1946. He passed away on the 29Th of October in the year 2000.

In 1959, Ven. Vipulasara formed National Art Front with the assistance of famous artists of Sri Lanka such as Mr. Henri Darmasena, Mr. M. D. P. Jawardene, Mr. Ariyawansa Weerakody, Mr. Yasapala Salgadu, and Ven. Tiranagama Ratanasara Thero.

It was Ven. Vipulasara thero who reintroduced and made the Art of Coconut Tender Leaf popular at welcome ceremonies of guests who arrived for the 1956 Buddhist Jubilee. Ven Vipulasara Thero was in the front line assisting Professor Gunepala Malalasekera for building and commencing the Bikku Training Centre at Paramadamma Chetheeya Buddhist University at Rathmalana. Visiting a Buddhist Art Centre in India in 1956, the Thero gained a vast knowledge and insight. He was diplomatic to the extent of gaining the support of Prime Minister Sri Jawaharlal Nehru in that visit. Practically all the temples and the public set about to consult Ven. Papalagama with regard to building of temples, cultural decorations of buildings and ceremonies.

After the passing away of most venerable Walane Sattissara Thero on the 14th of Janurary 1960, Ven. Mapalagama Vipulasa became the chief of Paramadamma Cheteeya Buddhist Campus. Every attractive cultural piece of art at Parama Chetheeya Campus displays the artistic skills of Ven. Mapalagama Vipulasara.

As a result of Ven. Nathtandiye Pannakara, Ven. Udakendawela Sirisaranankara and Ven. Mapalagama Vipulasara Thero's collective efforts, General Buddhist Congress of Sri Lanka came into existence. Ven. Vipulasara functioned as the General Secretary at first, and then as the Chairman. Present chairmanship is held by Ven. Diviyagaha Yasasci Thero.

I do not exactly remember when I met most venerable Dr. Mapalagama Vipulasara Thero, but I am sure it was at least five decades ago. The venerable Thero's every support and encouragement made possible my life-dedicated mission of expanding Sarvodaya in every inch of Sri Lanka.

Ven. Vipulasara is named in every functioning Buddhist Congress in all countries. The venerable functioned as the chairman of World General Buddhist Congress, the General Secretary of Indian Mahabodhi Association and so on, and it was not in Sri Lanka that I came to know the venerable Thero and his inner nature. We first met and came to know each other in international conferences abroad. I had the opportunity of meeting the venerable Thero and discuss matters in relation to what we can do for the benefit of Buddhism in Sri Lanka. When I was appointed as a chairman of the World Religious Parliament, Ven. Vipulasara delightfully introduced me to all his fellow members of Mahabodhi Association who had come from several countries.

In the same manner, at the World Peace Conference in Moscow, the World Buddhist Conferences in South Korea and Japan, and in Australia, Thailand, India and Taiwan Ven. Vipulasara looked after me as his own brother.

There are no words to explain the extent of benevolence in Ven. Vipulasara. In any country, Ven. Thero stayed in the same hotel or nearby hotel, and everyday morning and night he used to bring in and share meals with me.

Once while we were in a shopping complex in Moscow, he bought many souvenirs and forced them on me saying "I have no one to go back and give presents, but you have your wife and children". The Thero used to do the same for his fellow members in every country.

Once I went to his temple in Sri Lanka on my way without any invitation to see the Thero giving instruction to others for some task which seemed important. I inquired about it to know that a single devotee without any family members who did a notable service to the benefit of Buddhism had passed away, and that the Thero was making arrangements to bring the body to and hold the funeral at the temple. I also attended the funeral which had been organized perfectly.

One of the most deep-rooted desires in my life was to build a universal space where everyone can learn, meditate and attain noble inner peace. While this was being built I wanted to plant a branch of a Sri Maha Bodhi in a specially-built bodhi terrace in the premises. The instant I informed my desire to Ven. Vipulasara came to the site, drew a plan to construct the terrace, and accompanied me to Anuradhapura to obtain a branch from the Sri Maha Bodhi. That branch of Sri Maha Bodhi, planted under the auspicious time, lives magnificently at the Wishva Nikethana receiving our offerings and reminding us of Ven. Mapalagama Vipulasara Thero.

Ven. Mapalagama had a weakness for testing every alternative medicine for his diabetes condition, shifting from one to another

suggested by anybody. All of my efforts to make him understand the gravity of it failed. On several occasions he asked me too to test several of them as I was also a patient of diabetes. And at the end, both of his kidneys failed as a result of trying a Cuban local medicine. I was among the few frequent visitors of venerable Thero on his last few days. With the same jovial smiles on his face the venerable Thero advised me not to do the same foolish thing he did. He passed away on the 29th of October in the year 2000.

Everyone knows the great service done by Ven. Mapalagama Vipulasara for the benefit of Sri Lankan art and craft. In that era, you could hardly find a national, religious or cultural festival, ceremony or event organized without the consultation of Ven. Mapalagama Vipulasara Thero. His brave revolutionary reforms helped to protect historical art and crafts. The mere stroke of a pencil of Ven Mapalagam Vipulsar was worthy of being turned into an art. That was his intrinsic legacy.

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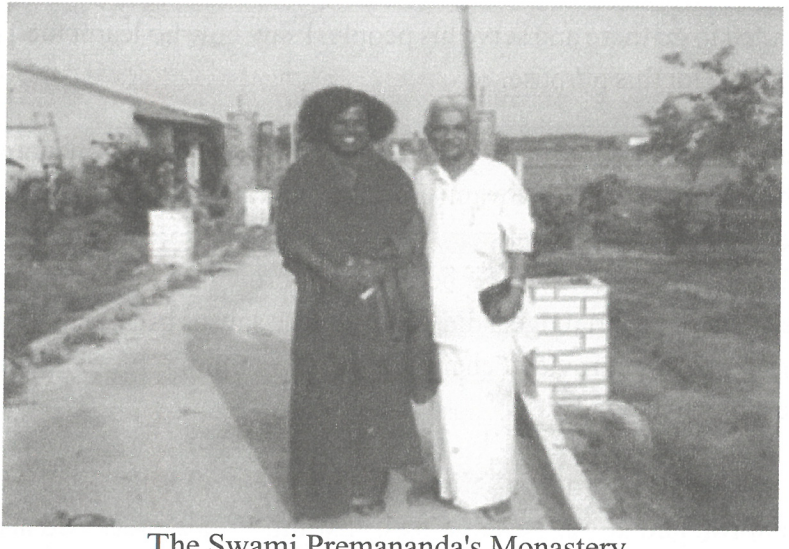
A Great Soul

In a civilized democratic social system, right to appeal in a high court when one is indicted with a death sentence is a fundamental human right.

This chapter is about a person who was sentenced to death in the lowest court and died in the prison being denied his right to appeal in a high court.

India is our neighbour which has a court of justice with a fine record. It was brave enough to summon even country's minister of justice on corruption charges. But this story proves the ability of politicians to bypass the system of justice at low levels.



The Swami Premananda's Monastery

Hon. Swami Premananda

This person who died while serving a life prison term under an unfair judgment of an Indian court, was a Sri Lankan. In my personal opinion he was a great Sri Lankan.

He was Swami Premananda who was known as 'Matale Swami' among Sri Lankans who passed away in prison. He was a Tamil educated in Sinhalese medium, and since many Tamils had fled to India with their children after the 1983 riots, he decided to go there and serve his people. I saw how he learnt the Tamil language for this purpose.

I am one of among those who believe in paranormal phenomena. When I first heard of Swami Premananda at Matale, Sri Lanka in 1980, I went to his monastery, and was listening to a sermon he was doing in Sinhalese. I was far behind in the crowd. Standing next to me was a district court judge. I did know how he saw us but he called us by our names, and provided chairs for us next to him. From that day, I knew him personally.

He supported Sarvodaya activities prior to and after the 1983 riots in the north, and at our headquarters. Swami Premanadan Monastery, started in India in 1984, became extremely popular for educational

and spiritual services provided, and people in the thousands began to gather around him. An unbroken line of desperate poor and ill people began to flow towards him. He used to call me 'father'. Once I visited Swami Premanadan along with late minister Saumyamoothi Thondmen and his nephew: Mr. Arumugan Thondmen, who is now a minister. And the Swami said: "Father, ask this Arumugan to enter politics like his grandfather" He took the advice and entered politics and became a minister.

Brahman and other corrupt priests in India who sensed threats posed by Swami Premananda's good deeds against their source of income and excessive privileges, crafted a plot to get rid of him, filing cases on rape, fraud and murder charges against this innocent, humble and humane priest. Certain media in India and Sri Lanka investigated the case and at the end, Swami Premananda was indicted for murder in the lowest court without any established evidence. The Indian government did not respond to any requests I made along with a retired Supreme Court judge to appeal against the verdict.

I went to the prison in Thamilnadu to see him. He looked magnificent even in the prisoners' uniform. He hugged me and appreciated my visit saying "Thaththa (father) came to see me then". I saw every officer ranking from highest to lowest, bowing to him with honour. I would like to mention here, a few of words he told me that day:

'Father, I am living a spiritual life with a vision. That does not mean that I am immune to the results of karma. Lord Buddha preached us about karma, did he not? I am going through karmic causation. Those who conspired against me too will have to face the same karmic

causation. I will not use powers I possess against this karmic causation. It is against our priesthood. Each one of us has to face our karma. I am living in this prison with the utmost happiness. Doing my meditation to the fullest, I strive to bring these unfortunate prisoners onto the correct track of life.' With these words he tried to sooth the sadness and disappointment in my mind about the Indian system of justice.

Later he contacted me over the phone and said "Father, I am critically ill. I always remember all of your good deeds for me. I may not live longer. If I lived, and I am released, I will definitely come and join Sarvodaya's mission to unite our divided people"

That was the last time I heard his voice. I was extremely sad to hear that he passed away due to complications in his liver, prior to a surgery. Not only those who are born Buddhists follow the path reached by the Lord Buddha.

May Sri Premanandan Swami attain Nirvana!

My Wife - Neetha Dhammachari

I agree with the view that an autobiography should contain details about the writer's family, and therefore, I decided to include a description about my wife, children and grandchildren.

With Neetha

If Miss Neetha Dammachari Elpitiarachchi had not become a Mrs Neetha Dammachari Ariyarathne, My and Sarvodaya's direction would have been a different one. As a result of her being my life partner, we were able to direct Sarvodaya towards various directions I had never thought of earlier. Today is our 50th wedding anniversary.

All of the elders in Sarvodaya address her as 'Neetha Nangi' and others 'Neetha akka' or 'Neetha Nenda'

I wrote about my predestined nuptial tie with Neetha. If we were to write the experience we gained together and individually for the past fifty years, it would have been a book with several volumes.

We lived content with happiness for the past fifty years. Living serving others was the key for our happiness. In our nuclear family of 28, consisting of three daughters and three sons and their fifteen daughters and sons, we live with happiness and peace.

Although I am also involved in finding this happiness to some extent, full credit of it goes to Neetha. She wakes up every morning before anyone of us and goes to bed later than all of us. She spends about two hours in the garden of our house and Damsak Mandiraya along with others to maintain the gardens. And having prepared my bed tea and breakfast, she goes to the Sarvodaya Suwasetha Home to look after the needs of infants, babies and preschool children there. Then she goes to the market, selects the best produce for us, and prepares our lunch and dinner.

Then she spends hours over the phone managing day to day activities of all Sarvodaya children homes, elderly homes across the island, and to channel funds from various government departments, private organizations and donors. She keeps and protects over thousand helpless children in various Sarvodaya homes. She is always involved in organizing all-island welfare programs through Sarvodaya Suwasetha Society for Tsunami, flood, landslide, famine and war victims.

All these are done voluntarily, and I admire and praise Neetha's self-restraint to continue her work enjoying all baseless, false allegations of some media and individuals.

In the midst of all this, she perfectly manages the wife's and mothers' duties of a husband and six children. I could devote my life to Sarvodaya activities to the extent that I did not remember a birthday of my child because Neetha looked after them to the pinpoint.

Neetha who bears the responsibilities of six children, their husbands and wives and children is truly a grandmother. I am sure she will shortly bear the responsibility of a great grandmother, since our oldest nephew got married recently.

I have a daily intake of countless local and foreign visitors, and offering them hospitality, even preparing lunch at least four times a week, is also on the shoulders of Neetha. I become tired even just talking to them, and I always wondered how she did all of these with a smiling face.

I had Neetha participate by my side at every award ceremony. I received international awards in America, Belgium, Canada, Germany, Japan, Philippines and India. I feel relieved I repaid at least 1% of my indebtedness to her.

Often I do not remember birthdays, death anniversaries, alms-giving dates and so on of our relations. Neetha remembers them all and attends to them on time.

She studied in the Colombo Musaeus College in the science stream. She wanted to be a doctor. Several of her fellow students became doctors, who are now retired. She abandoned that ambition and diverted to the never retiring occupation of healing the society, because of me. I am the sole convict of that act. I feel that she still has a sense of that desire within her, since I do not know another person who personally knew specialist doctors, and had such an exceptional knowledge about diseases, medicine, nursing, and hospitals. Those who are connected to Sarvodaya Suwasetha, our relations and others daily contacte Neetha over the phone or come to our home to get advice about ailments, medicine, hospitals and doctors as if our home was a medical centre.

She was awarded the 2011 prize of International Day of Women. It was given to her in appreciation of her life long dedication and contribution towards the welfare of deformed children, elderly, helpless orphan children and child mothers through Sarvodaya Suvasetha Institute. The ministry of child development and women affairs in a grand ceremony at the BMICH on 8th of March of 2011 with the participation of Hon. Prime Minister D. M. Jayarathne and Hon. minister Basil Rajapaksha, who presented the award to Mrs. Neetha Dammachari Ariyaratne, the general secretary of Sarvodaya Suwasetha Society.

minister Basil Rajapaksha presenting the award to Mrs. Neetha Dammachari Ariyaratne amidst Hon. prime minister and the guests.

Neetha with the award

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Darkness to Light

Marie Musaeus Higgins - peter De Abrew Memorial Speech

Neetha Dhammachari Ariyaratne

"My dear principal, vice principal, teachers, ladies and gentlemen of the board of directors, past students, students and parents.

I am very humbly proud of being selected to do this year's Marie Musaeus Higgins-Peter De Abrew commemorative speech. It is an honour to the Sarvodaya movement and me. Furthermore, as an old girl of Musaeus I strongly believe the influence and insight I gained from reading the biographies of Madam Marie Musaeus Higgins and Peter De Abrew; old girl Buddhist nun Sudarma who used to teach us Buddhism, and other teachers, gave me the necessary strength to dedicate my life to work towards the welfare of mankind for five decades. Since I was awarded the Peter De Abrew scholarship for best student when I was a student of Musaeus, my father who was a middle class business man had to pay only the hostel fee. I still remember that with thanks to the then administration even after fifty years.

Under the leadership of the Founder of Sarvodaya Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne, the first sramadana program was held in Kanatholuwa village in the Kurunegala district in 1958 with the participation of teachers and students of Colombo Nalanda College. In April 1959, Under the guidance of the 23rd scout group leader of Colombo Musaeus College: Mrs. Seetha Rajasooriya, a group of five female

scout leaders participated in an international sramadana camp held in a poor rural village called Manaawa, condemned by society. I was one of the members of that group, and I still recall with honour and pride, the value of life experience gained that day.

Today that program is widespread nationally and internationally as the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement. For over a half a century, the movement has covered all four corners of the country, in over 15,000 villages, establishing non-violent social reformation by awakening psychic energies within humans.

Today, as a full time voluntary leader, with my fellow members, I am involved in a mission helping those who have become helpless due to various misdeeds of society. Here I have dedicated my life in activities aimed at looking after and providing vocational training to babies and children abandoned on roads and hospitals, and disabled and deformed children, and transforming them into productive individuals to society, and also to provide shelter, protection, affection, counselling, education, vocational training, and rehabilitation to girls aged between 12 to 18 who have become pregnant due to rape in sections of society where our unique values system is corrupted. I am extremely happy to mention that so fir we have been successful in rehabilitating many such girls who were brought up with affection and protection in our Masewana Homes.

We also maintain four female children's homes and two male children's homes in various areas of the country. Many children brought up in those homes have received degrees from universities; some are continuing studies abroad in universities with scholarships.

We face strict financial problems in keeping these programs running, and I am in a tedium when sourcing funds for the same purpose. I take this opportunity to thank all who accorded us even with a tinge of financial support.

The motto of our college is "follow the light", and therefore I made the theme of my speech "from Darkness to Light"

If one can get motivated, as a result of adapting the theme of Sarvodaya which is the enlightenment of all; to serve for the benefit of the human community of entire world, one can implement and execute policies with truth, non-violence and unselfishness.

Man cannot further survive on this planet without a human value system. We are living in a planet engulfed in poverty, starvation and disease. The world is in need of charitable, great new humans who are capable of refusing organized criminal social systems which are dragging humans into abominable dispositions. This new human will create a new human society and a perpetual, charitable human race.

Here I would like to do a brief description of the vision and mission of Sarvodaya.

The core human value systems of Buddhism and all other religions and Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy sarva-udaya or awakening of all, truth, non-violence and unselfishness were the fundamental policies of guidelines for the philosophical way of Sarvodaya.

The ultimate objective is the creation of this New Human and New Society. We started Sarvodaya in Sri Lanka with the appeal to donate

labour, ideas, wealth and time for the benefit of others. We named this process Shramadana. We selected several villages out of the poorest, practiced shramadana along with the people of the villages to uplift their living conditions, and built other development activities. Through these spontaneous development projects, self-energy, participation of community and planning activities we gained the fulfilment of human and community needs.

During the past 54 years from its inception, Sarvodaya gained substantial maturity. Every section of Sri Lankan communities, and individuals and organizations of the international community accounted for all of our achievements. I humbly mention that my full personal contribution has also accounted largely to its achievements.

In five decades Sarvodaya evolved to be a national living peoples' organization. It was really a coincidence. There were several constituents that sustained such a course. Idealistic vision abreast of the time and context that surpasses narrow divisions such as race, religion, caste, tribe party politics, local and foreign are important among them.

The equality in objectives of Sarvodaya was helpful to the progression of human society. Transparency, flexibility and acting in line with the laws of nature are accounted for that.

Not only that, we also managed to reach rural, and urban working community of estates and understand their culture, feelings and customs, and identify spiritual, cultural and socio economic challenges faced by them. We formulated a practical scheme to help them through self-energy, participation and organization as a human

community and developing communal conscientiousness and personality. Introducing suitable technology, techniques and an organized structure for the purpose, continuously guiding the communities to take their fate under their control, Sarvodaya goes on very successfully.

That was how Sarvodaya managed to influence society covering all its ranges.

The development of a nation is to develop its people. 'People' refers to everybody inclusive of disabled and mentally retarded. No one can be uncared for or marginalized. Sarvodaya has organized development programs which are open to every individual to meaningfully participate for their self-development.

Sarvodaya defines development as a process of awakening and arising within. Quenching of never ending human desire and needs by never ending supply of goods and services is not considered by Sarvodaya as development. Instead, we have defined development as the awakening of the individual, family and community, fulfilling their needs and preserving human qualitative values without spoiling the mind, poisoning the body, distorting the balance of nature, widening the gap between the rich and poor and contravening cords of culture. In fact in authentic development, we expect a material and spiritual growth mixed with sharing, caring, fraternity and peace.

Proving the success of its living mission with practically outstanding objective of creating the new man and the new society, the Sarvodaya Movement has so far established and managed over three thousand infant homes, Gramodaya centres, district development and

educational institutes, agricultural technological centres, and hold frequent Shramadana Camps. Apart from these, we provide services to people effected by tsunami, flood, drought and other natural disasters, those who are displaced due to war and those who seek legal assistance, and conduct welfare and rehabilitation programs for homeless children and women.

These programs bear similarities in the way that they are all ancestral, spiritual and cultural and how they are updated for international use.

We could guide and encourage governmental and non-governmental organizations to find new ways to serve people. Because of the universal and cosmopolitan nature of Sarvodaya's message and programs, they have spread in many developed and underdeveloped countries.

Conventional society is dying. The main force in operation for the past few decades was the compilation of more and more material wealth in order to satisfy artificially created needs and desires.

It is no wonder why people have lost peace in mind, cooperation with fellow humans and harmony between personal and institutional context. Adverse consequences as a result of the deterioration of human personality is much obvious in societies of countries where science and technology is developed to the highest level. They are faced with many disasters such as environmental pollution, environmental disequilibrium, mental disorders, cancer, heart diseases, breaking of marriages and nuclear threat. As a result of historical forces active for the last five decades, we in Sri Lanka as well seem to be trapped in this never-ending cycle. Should we adapt

to their development framework as it is? Shall we adapt ourselves to their endless materialistic desires? Or else shall we follow our own carefully selected development framework based on the fundamental needs of our people.

We believe education has to be developed on self-awareness, and that the first priority should be given to the development of human personality in all levels of education. By accepting such a vision we will be able to build an environment that helps human development from the day he conceived in mothers' womb. Our program called "A Dharma Approach to Motherhood" conducted for pregnant mothers and their husbands is a program aimed at this purpose.

Today we live in a narrow world built by us for our short term survival. We should refuse western framework development without any fear or hesitation. Not a single society became happy or satisfied, accepting western framework. Natural resources of the world is not sufficient to satisfy the consumer patterns of western societies. They will not be able to survive another decade if they were to continue their current rate of consumption of resources. The only way to fulfil our peoples' needs is by way of creating development programs unique to us, without getting caught in the trap of harmful, materialistic and never returning western development framework. There is no other country, to my knowledge, than Sri Lanka to initiate this challenging mission.

As a nation we have inherited a historical and universal philosophical vision, conventional but surpasses all contemporary scientific achievements. Our country still has a majority of people who honour authentic leadership values. The obstacle we have, as I see, is fear for

thinking new, and failing to act with righteousness, courage and ambition.

It is critically the high time to release the completely novel, intellectual force capable of creating the Enlightened New Human, New Society and New World Order.

Inviting you all to ignite a new stream of light toward this vision, I would like to cite an inspirational verse of Mrs Musaeus Higgins: "Children, I am also determined to achieve the kingdom of Buddha in the course of Samsara. Fulfilling Perfections for State of Buddha is opened for everyone. What is necessary is unselfish, pure mindfulness and unconquerable determination. Although we all cannot attain the sublime State of Buddha, it is not impossible to lay the foundation for state of Bosath in this life".

May the Triple Gem Bless You All

Neetha Ariyaratne.

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A Contended father with his Offspring

Neetha and me with our children and grand children

By the time the third edition of Bhawa Thanha had been sent for printing, I was a father of six children and a grandfather of six nieces and five nephews. Twelve will be born shortly. Since my eldest nephew, Janantha Desara got married recently, I am going to be a great grandfather by the end of this year.

Samya Charika is my eldest daughter. She got married to Gynaecologist Upali Marasinghe. Because of Charika's outstanding performance in school and university studies, she won scholarships for her higher education. She was awarded the presidential and commonwealth scholarships as a result of which she attained her masters, her law degree and finally her doctorate in International law from Harvard University. Having served as a senior lecturer in

Colombo law college for 19 years, she abruptly resigned, and established a personal voluntary institute for the protection of international human rights of children. She is also chairperson of the Viswa Neketha Peace Home under the A. T. Ariyaratne caretaker fund.

Consultant Gynaecologist Dr Upali Marasinha, while serving in the government, voluntarily conducts his program " A Daham Approach To Motherhood" for pregnant women and their husbands, based in the Vishwa Nikethan Peace Home. Hundreds of newly-married couples benefit from this program, and currently it is being conducted in Padavi, Polonnaruwa, Ampara, Galle and Rathnapura areas. He also conducts a program called "Mind Body Clinic" based in the Viswa Nikethanaya.

Charika and Upali has a son named Janantha Desara. He receieved a degree in science from the Brunel University in England, and currently works in the University of Moratuwa. Their second child Damni Nivedya still doing her higher studies.

My second child Winya Shanthidas Ariyaratne learned medicine from Lasal University of Philippines and Charam University in England, and at John Hopkins of America, he gained a post graduate specialist degree in community health science. He served in the government medical service, as a lecturer in Colombo Medical College for sometimes. Then he resigned and permanently joined Sarvodaya to assist me as its executive director, and eased the workload on me for the past 12 years. In the last general assembly he was unanimously appointed general secretary of Sarvodaya. Today he is involved in the grave task of building an authentic civil social organization through

creating a network by combining all national level independent Sarvodaya organizations and all island village level incorporated societies.

He is also the chairman of the newly-formed Deshodaya Financial Corporation, and Sarvodaya Viswaleka, Fusion and all other major Sarvodaya organizations that come under him. Winya is married to Madara, daughter of Professor Nandasena Rathnapala. She is a lawyer. She works as a legal officer of National Mortgage And Investment Bank. They have a son and a daughter named Hasala and Aseni. One day I will pass away with a free mind as I do know I have great son in Winya Shanthidas to carry forward the dream I created for Sri Lanka and the World, to which I devoted my whole life.

Jeewan Dammika is my third child. My second son. Professionally he is an aircraft pilot. He worked in Sri Lanka Air Force and Sri Lankan Air Lines as a pilot. Currently he is employed in Qatar Airlines. He is married to Shehari Fernando. They have two children, a son and a daughter named Jithwan and Kanishta.

Jeewan loves me very much. He equally performs his duties to father and mother, brothers and sisters, and friends. He is a member of Vishwa Nikethana, who always assist us when his services are required. During the 2004 tsunami disaster he did an outstanding service travelling around the country.

My fourth child is Sadeewa Saamadipa. She is my second daughter. She is married to Chandana De Silva who was the director general of Securities and Exchange Commission. Currently, he works as the director of Delmage. Sadeewa was educated in Sirimavo

Bandarnayake Girls' college. She received a degree from Bangalore University in India, and then her Master's degree from University of Sri Jayawardanepura. While working in the ministry of environment, one day she came home having submitted her resignation, saying that there was nothing creative she could do there other than writing speeches for the minister. Since then she worked voluntarily as a member of Viswa Nikethana. They both have two wonderful children: a son and a daughter.

My fifth child, son Diyath Samantha, educated in Nalanda, completed a degree in computer science from the University of Mississippi in America. He works in Virtusa Limited Liability company. He looks after the Sarvodaya website. He is married to Sheneri Smith, and resides near to my house.

My sixth and youngest child Nimna Hayanthi is my third daughter. She is married to Dammika Gamage and has two children. Nimna got a degree from the University of Sri Jayawardenepura in business management but never worked.

All of my children are residing close to my home, and their frequent visits bring happiness to me and my wife Neetha.

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Completing our Temple with Dagoba And other Facilities

I joined the ancient temple of Palliyagodalle, Ravathawatte, Moratuwa as a contributor and caretaker about 40 years ago when Ven. Yatipauwe Rathanasara Thero was the chief incumbent. During the first half of those 4 decades, we could exchange services with each other in equal proportions under the guidance of Ven. Rathanasara.

After the passing away of chief incumbent Ven. Rathanasara, without a proper leadership, the temple was subjected to poor management. With a history of 400 years, this temple may be the oldest temple in this area. It was my mother who used to be a contributing Sil Matha here for over 20 years and the one who pointed out the missing essential element of this temple. I did a considerable donation while she was alive to initiate the construction of the stupa, the missing element, but it was not fruitful.

After 20 years of my mother's passing away, the idea of constructing that missing element for this temple struck my mind miraculously. Although I did not have any funds at that time, with written permission from the present chief incumbent of the temple Ven. Uragaha Nadiyo Thero and contributory council, I came forward to construct the stupa. While I was doing the preliminaries at the site I thought that the Stupa constructed here should stand at least for 500 years. And I made sure that quality of construction was on such a standard. The expenditure was well over 22 million Rupees.

The Building Plan

1. Foundation work:

1.1 Clearing the bush growth
1.2 Clearing the debris and discarded materials
1.3 Clear away the trees
1.4 Create the foundation ditches

2. Building work in sequence:

2.1 Building the platform of Dagoba, color wash and supply power
2.2 Build four flower offering altars to worship four Buddha statues and cover with aluminum framed glass boxes.
2.3 Construct a concrete pave way complete with elephant and dragon sculptures to enter the Dagoba.
2.4 Construct a Sandakadapahana (a historical sculptural feature found at the entrances of buildings)
2.5 Complete the path way with granite flooring
2.6 Construct an drainage system in the Dagoba premises
2.7 Construct a stairway entrance from Palliyagodalla wihara road
2.8 Constructing a safety wall to the stairway
2.9 Building a 12 foot gate and a Shanthi Thorana at the Palliyagodalla entrance
2.10 Complete the 16 foot Western side and Eastern side safety walls
2.11 Paint the wall

2.12 Build a 03 feet tall supporting wall on top of the 16 foot wall using cement stones and color wash

2.13 Build 21 light posts on the safety walls and give power supply

2.14 Clean and color wash the existing side wall

2.15 Repair the existing side wall between Boddhi tree and meditation center

2.16 Construct a new 48 feet long 11.5 feet tall side wall expanding the existing wall for the safety of Bo tree and dharmashala and increase the diameter of the Bo tree section.

2.17 Build a stair way at the entrance to the Bo tree area and area of 28 Bo trees.

2.18 Build a stone wall from the wall inside the Bo tree area towards the side wall in two sections and build three stairs for one side wall.

2.19 Construct a 03 feet tall safety wall within Bo tree area and repair an existing section of the wall

2.20 Repair light posts on the wall and in built 07 new ones

2.21 Put concrete to section of the flower altar area

2.22 Construct an open concrete stage on the right side of the Dagoba entrance at one corner of the Bo tree area.

2.23 Construct a 100 foot long 50 foot wide meditation center using support from the concrete posts of the Dagoba. Build 51 meditation cubicles color wash and complete the building.

2.24 Build a net covering for the meditation center. Fix a public address system and supply power.

2.25 Build 07 feet tall 03 doors to the meditation center using iron bars

2.26 Build a stairway from the meditation center to enter the area of 28 Buddha altars

2.27 Pile earth to the garden next to the meditation center to plant 28 Bo trees.

2.28 Build 28 Buddha altars, complete tiling and cover with aluminum framed glass boxes.

2.29 Placing of the 28 Buddha statues and supplying power.

2.30 Constructing an inner safety wall in front of the 28 Buddha statues.

2.31 Constructing a sand platform in front of the 28 Buddha statues.

2.32 Install drainage pipes for rain water management

2.33 Getting a new power supply way from Palliyagodalla road

2.34 Install 04 taps for water supply in the garden area.

2.35 The sculpturing and drawings depicting Lord Buddhas arrival to Lanka is being currently created inside the Dagoba.

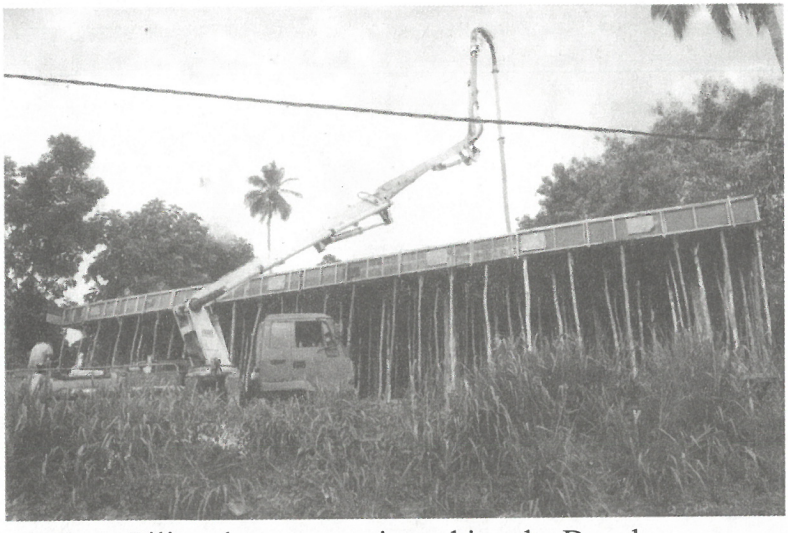
The Rs. 10,20000/- donated from the committee was used to construct 16 concrete pillars to Dagoba, building the settling for concrete piling for Dagoba, donating the gem crystal, installing the entrance door and carving, purchase of paint and filler for the Dagoba and expenses of the Dagoba ceremonies.

My private donations exceeded Rs. 20 million. The award funds I received from Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai for world Buddhist missionary services, funds gifted for Bhasawa Shri award from Sri Murga Math Ashram in Karnataka India, donations received from worshippers during my American tour and the monetary and other donations from local and international donors were used for considerable completion of the Dagoba constructions.

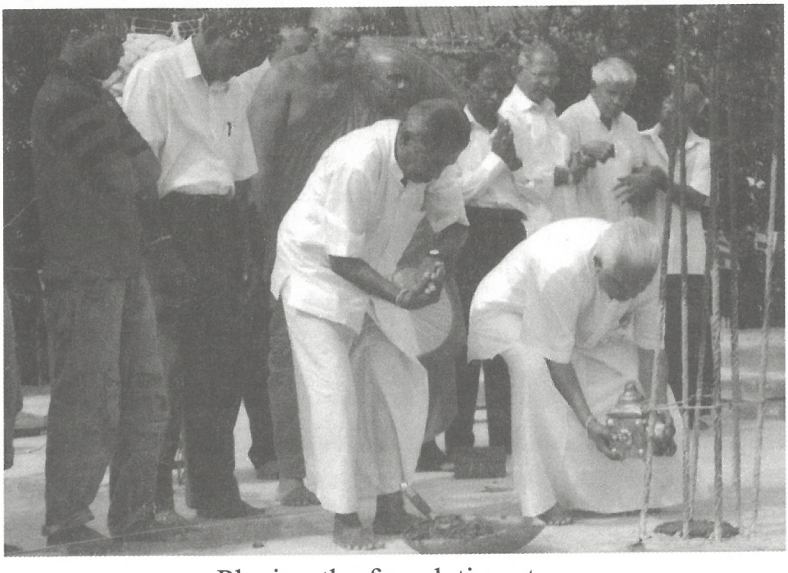
On 23rd of August 2012 with the participation of a large gathering the ceremony of placing the valuables within the Dagoba was conducted. On the 23rd of October the holy relics were taken in procession from my worship room to the Palliyagodella temple premises and was kept in an altar for worship by the pilgrims overnight where an all-night Buddhist sermon was conducted. Afterwards, on the 24th morning, the placing of the holy relics and the gem crystal ceremonies were conducted at auspicious times.

On 04 the November 2012 an all- night chanting of pirith and sermon was conducted at Sarvodaya headquarters. Later, on the 05th an alms giving for 100 buddhist monks organized after which, on the 06th, from 3.00 pm to 6.00pm the Dagoba was ceremoniously unfolded and the Bodhi Pooja and Dagoba Pooja was conducted at 7.00 pm before concluding the auspicious event.

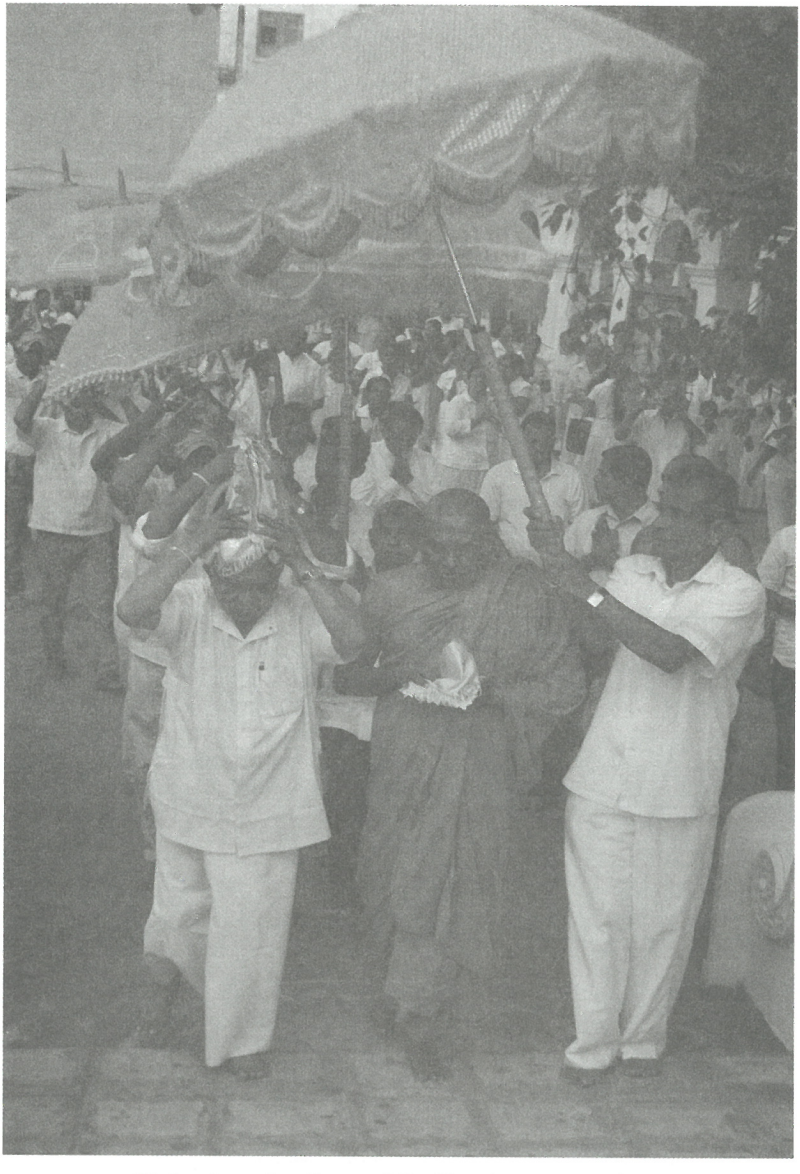
I am grateful for his holiness Sri Sathya Sai baba for his divine energy for aiding in acquiring over 50 holy relics and also, I thank Mr Kanchana for his support in the matter. We knew our efforts were fruitful when the worshippers witnessed holy rays (Buduras) at the unfolding of the Dagoba and (Dewatha Eli) at the first meditation event.



Piling the concrete in making the Dagoba

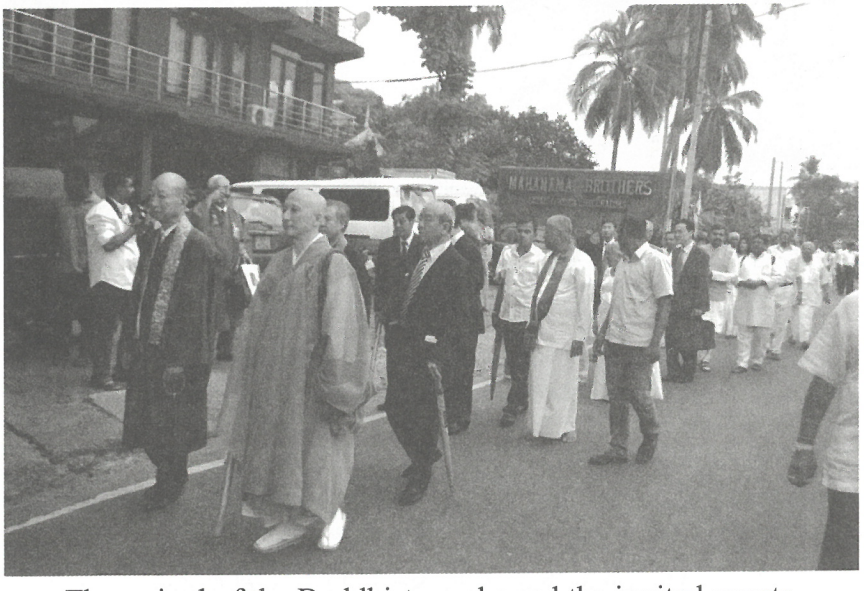


Placing the foundation stone



Bringing the Sacred Relics in procession

Placing of the Sacred Relics



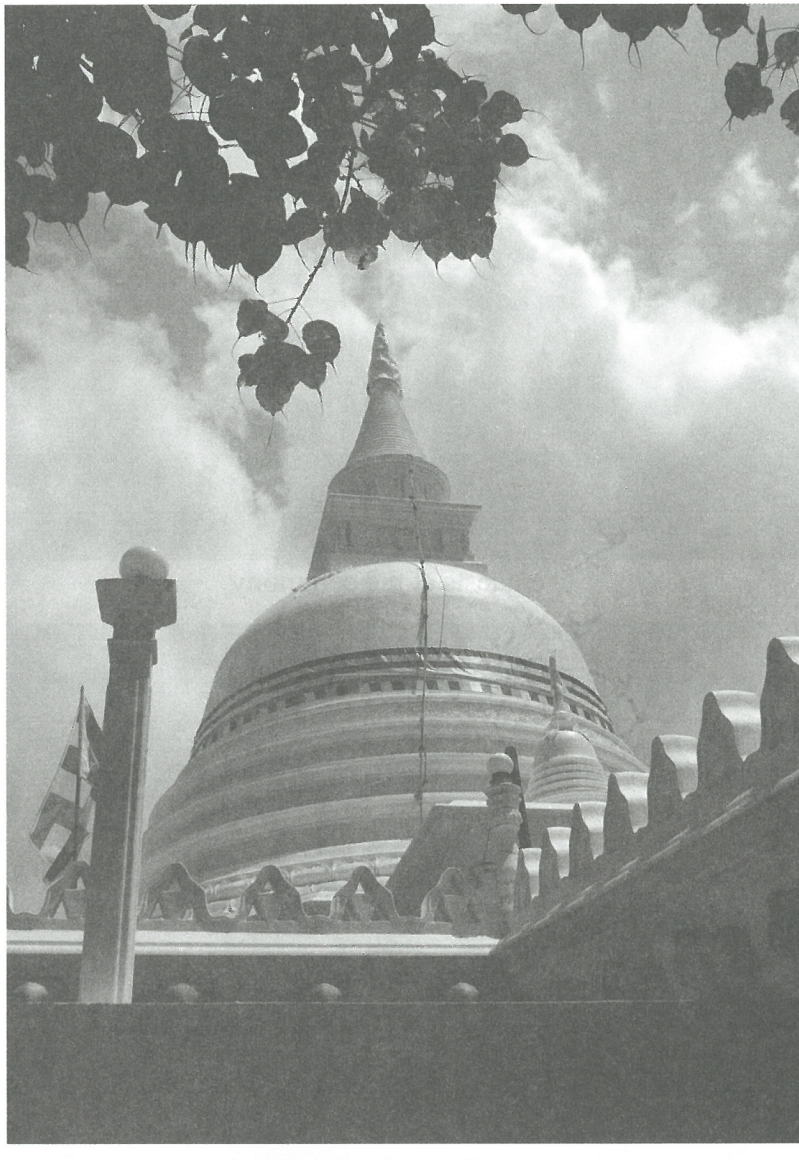
The arrival of the Buddhist monks and the invited guests

The arrival of the Buddhist Monks

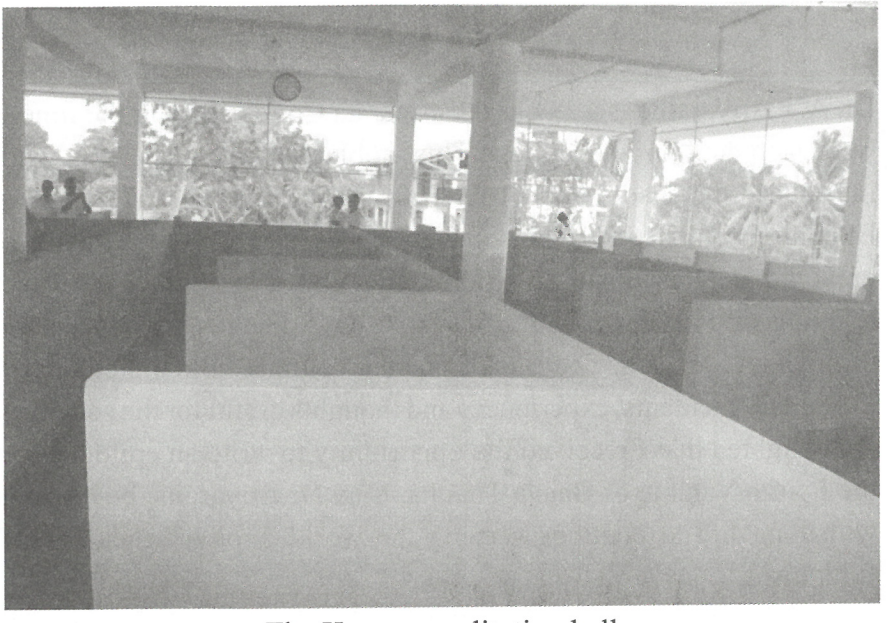
The revealing of the Sacred Conical Spire

The guests at the ceremony

The inaugural offering of the flowers and lamps
at the Karuna hall by Ven, Bhanthe Mahinda thero



The completed Dagoba



The Karuna meditation hall

Epilogue

Dr. A.T Ariyaratne is a teacher of Nalanda College during the time I was a student in the college.This nobleman is the person who introduced the shadow of selflessness paving my way to become a Buddhist Monk. He is the person who sow the seeds in my mind of the great human responsibility of helping our own kind. The close relationship I have with him since those days, I believe would last all throughout Samsara. The Bhava Thanha volumes hold a plethora of exemplary incidents, experiences and thoughts useful for the society. I am delighted that I received the opportunity to write an epilogue for the Fourth Volume of Bhava Thanha. May Dr Ariyaratne be blessed with long life to continue serving the world through teachings of Buddhism.

Rev. Buddhangala Ananda Thero,
Buddhangala Arya Monastery,
Ampara.

A.T. Ariyaratne

I have heard of the founder of Sarvodaya Dr A. T. Ariyaratne, and through his dedication and strive how Sarvodaya reached to the villages all over Sri Lanka and the successful manner Sarvodaya faced difficult eras walking towards continued success. The selfless service he has given towards the Sri Lankan people is truly exemplary to the youths of the country.

Former President of India,
Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam

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